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AMATEUR THEATRICALS

A Practical Guide for Amateur Actors

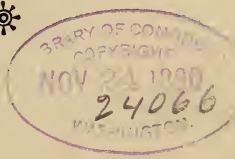
CONTAINING DIRECTIONS FOR ORGANIZING CLUBS, STAGE MANAGEMENT, SELECTING PLAYS, CASTING CHARACTERS, REHEARSING, COSTUMING, MAKING-UP AND ACTING.

BY

CHARLES TOWNSEND

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TO

THE AMATEUR DRAMATIC SOCIETIES

OF AMERICA

IN TESTIMONY OF THEIR NOBLE AND UNSELFISH
LABOR FOR CHARITY'S SAKE

THIS BOOK

IS FAITHFULLY INSCRIBED

BY

THE AUTHOR



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PREFACE.

THE practical study of the histrionic art is beneficial in many ways. It teaches one to speak the English language properly; to be easy and graceful in movement; to lose self-consciousness. Therefore, it should be encouraged. Such, then, is the purpose of this book.

In preparing this work I have avoided all theoretical vaporings, and have padded no lines with superfluous words nor idle phrases.

What I have written is the result of long experience on both the amateur and the professional stage; therefore, this work being practical will, I trust, be valuable.

I do not imply by this that even the most exhaustive study of the following pages will make a great actor of the amateur. Nothing but experience combined with natural ability can do that. But if the hints and suggestions herein noted are carefully followed, any amateur possessing the requisite amount of pluck and energy can give at least a creditable performance—which, in truth, is all that can be expected from one who devotes but a few brief hours to an art at once exacting and laborious.

This work—which is, practically, a primer of dramatic art—is in no sense a thesis for the professional actor. He has

served his novitiate—else he has no business with the sock and buskin. But even the finished actor may find an occasional reminder which will prove beneficial; and many so-called "professionals" should digest the book, covers, binding and all.

I might have written a larger book; I could not well have written a smaller one. If it pleases you—well and good; if it does not please you—again well and good.

CHARLES TOWNSEND.



CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

AN amateur theatrical entertainment, if well conducted, is a double enjoyment—actors and auditors being mutually pleased. On the other hand, a badly represented play is wearisome to everybody. If the actors fail to grasp the meaning of their lines, if they are not up in their parts, if their entrances and exits are ill-timed and their words inarticulate, then the entertainment will be a dire failure.

Some knowledge of stage craft is absolutely necessary. Even in the society comedy one must know how to enter and leave the stage; for, be it understood, the most finished drawing-room lounger would cut a sorry figure if he attempted to do the stage gentleman from a society standpoint. People in real life neither talk nor act as they do before the footlights. The unbroken flow of dialogue, the constant wit, humor and steady action—so necessary to drama—are never seen outside the theatre. On the stage we see things not as they are but as we imagine them to be. *And the actor succeeds best who best keeps up this illusion.*

Although it is true that great actors are born, not made, yet any person of sound mind and body can act some parts fairly well. Do not infer from this that every young woman can do *Juliet*, or every young man *Romeo*. Far from it. Indeed, it is this very presumption among certain too ambitious amateurs which leads to so many disastrous failures. A long, five-act tragedy is beyond the ability of even the most experienced amateurs, and it is rank folly to attempt anything of the kind.

Lack of application frequently ruins what might otherwise be an excellent performance. Too often it happens that peo-

ple either through carelessness, timidity or stubbornness, refuse to enter into the spirit of their parts, and the whole performance suffers. Either do your best, or do nothing.

Another serious fault which frequently puts a damper on an entertainment, is the inexcusable error of putting off certain lines of stage business until the night of the performance. If a man in command of an ocean steamer should declare that it would be time enough to learn navigation after he got out of sight of land, people would call him a lunatic; yet amateurs act in a similar way when they go through rehearsal after rehearsal, leaving important stage business until the last night.

And finally we have that unmitigated nuisance, the stumbling actor, who is never up in his lines, gives wrong cues, and, over and again, throws an entire scene into confusion. Such a man, no matter how great his natural ability may be, should be dropped without ceremony.

These and kindred subjects will be taken up later on and thoroughly discussed. They are mentioned at the outset because of their vital importance. Errors of this sort must be avoided from the beginning, otherwise a "ragged" performance is sure to follow.

Amateur acting is a pleasant diversion, a worthy pastime, and beneficial to all concerned. But good acting can be achieved only by perseverance, industry, and a willing, unselfish spirit.

In the following pages I propose to treat each branch of the art separately, in a plain, exhaustive, and common-sense manner. I shall avoid, so far as possible, the usual "shop talk" of the stage, which would be unintelligible to the average reader. All unfamiliar terms will be fully explained, and the descriptions will be such that, if carefully followed, a first-class entertainment will be the result. The hints and suggestions which I give are thoroughly practical—the result of long years of experience—and therefore should be followed to the letter, even though at times they appear unnecessarily hard.

CHAPTER II.

ORGANIZING.

THE old and true saying to the effect that everybody's business is nobody's business applies with marked emphasis to amateur theatricals. People must be talented indeed who can give a good entertainment without a stage manager, property-man, prompter or business manager. Yet many amateurs attempt this very thing, and wonder blankly at their lack of success.

On the professional stage discipline is very strict. Lateness at rehearsals, stage waits, loud talk behind the scenes, etc., are punished by more or less heavy fines. Unfortunately, the amateur stage manager is unable to exact obedience by fines or threats; therefore, in organizing a club it is best to include only those who will be prompt, earnest and willing.

In choosing the members of the club it is well to diversify the characters as much as possible. Bear in mind, however, that people must be selected who have natural ability in certain rôles. Few amateurs are versatile enough to *assume* any characters. If cast in suitable parts they may act naturally and effectively; but cast them in unfamiliar lines and failure is certain to follow. Therefore if one of your company has a *penchant* for Irish characters, put him down for "character" parts. Dialect is his forte, and he should attempt nothing else. The "low comedian," who does comic parts, must be a man with a natural fund of humor—of a jovial, rollicking kind. If he is able to do "dialect" parts, so much the better. The "eccentric" comedian appears in many plays, but owing to

his touch-and-go qualities is very difficult to find. He is the fiery old soldier, the crusty lawyer, the crabbed old servant, and so on. Men who play these parts well are rare even on the professional stage; so if you have the good fortune to find one among your amateur friends treat him gently, for he is a "gem of purest ray serene." You will need a grave, dignified gentleman to play the bland and philanthropic "old man"—he of the soft heart and softer head, who loans the hero money without security and is the firm, though of course platonic, friend of the heroine. The "juvenile man" does the young lover; his part rarely rises above that of a "walking gentleman" and consequently he has but little to do. The "heavy man" is the detested villain who seeks to destroy the peace of mind of the heroine, who, in turn, usually gives him a piece of *her* mind, garnished with adjectives too numerous to mention. He has a thankless part. The soubrette makes faces at him and says that he is "mean!" The heroine sobs and calls him a "bub—bub—brute!" and the hero, after throwing sarcastic remarks and things at him all through the play, usually winds up by wafting him to a place where heat is a drug in the market. The "heavy man" must be a good actor, because a gentle villain is a theatrical impossibility. The "leading man" should be your best actor, and versatile withal. He should be blessed with at least a modicum of good looks; and a fair knowledge of elocution will prove of the utmost value, particularly if you attempt anything heroic. You will also need one or two unambitious gentlemen for "utility," to enact minor characters.

But the ladies!

Ah, now then, prepare for trouble.

Nothing short of *Juliet*, *Pauline*, or at least *Frou Frou* will satisfy the rising star of your dramatic club. Therefore, if you would be truly happy, do not admit any theatrical-mad young women to membership. At the outset you should

secure a staid, married lady for "old woman" characters, without whose services you can have no fond mammas, aggressive mothers-in-law, *bric-à-brac* old maids, nor stern female par-i-ents. For you may as readily expect to find icebergs in Florida as any young lady who will consent to enact an elderly rôle. The "leading lady"—the heroine whose course of true love runs more or less crooked—must needs be able to portray a great variety of emotions. Like the leading man, she should be versatile enough to represent love, hate, joy, sorrow, and, in fact, the entire round of dramatic passion. In the modern domestic drama, which without doubt is best suited to amateur clubs, there are few opportunities for indulging in the grand passions—for which let us be truly thankful. At the same time nobody knows what amateur actors will not attempt, so it is best to be prepared. Few amateur actresses are capable of depicting the "ingenu"—that delightful young woman who looks so innocent and knows so much—yet the character is a favorite with many authors, and if well done always makes a hit. The young lady who is selected for this line of work should have a natural air of naïve innocence, and be able to keep her features under control at all times. Your real ingenu does not bite off her words, mince, giggle nor chew gum. The charm of her work lies in the assumed artlessness of her words and actions. The more natural the assumption is, the better the part will be. The "soubrette" is Fun personified. Soubrette parts should be played by a girl who is full of life, fun and mischief; she may laugh, sing, dance, cry, pout and raise Cain generally. It is needless to say that no prude nor disciple of Browning should be cast in this liveliest of lively rôles.

The foregoing list of characters is all that you will need for most plays. And now, having secured your company—which, by the way, has been a task of no little difficulty, since the

people you want most are often the most difficult to secure—you are ready to organize.

Every dramatic club should have a stage manager, business manager, secretary and treasurer—the two latter being usually combined. There should also be a regular prompter and property-man—two officials of the utmost importance.

If rules and regulations are drawn up, carefully specifying the duties of officers and members, much friction will be avoided. Members will then know what is expected of them; there will be no clashing of authority, and all will go smoothly.

Let no one join an amateur dramatic club unless willing to do everything possible to make the pastime a success. If the stage manager casts you for a servant when you aspire to do *Richard the Third*, you should take the part offered you, without grumbling, and play it to the best of your ability. The despised "skeleton" may in your hands become a veritable giant and live in the memory of your hearers long after more ambitious characters are forgotten.

CHAPTER III.

THE STAGE MANAGER.

A GOOD stage manager needs the wisdom of Solomon, the patience of Job, and the diplomacy of Tallyrand. He must have these qualities to a degree at least, or he will speedily find himself in very hot water.

During my somewhat varied experience in theatrical work I have found no other position so exacting as that of stage manager, and my sympathy goes out whole-hearted to every amateur who attempts it.

He should be a good-natured man, and firm withal. And it may as well be understood from the outset that his authority must be unquestioned. His judgment must be final in every instance, or the result will be confusion worse confounded. Of course he should not be arbitrary. Private suggestions should receive respectful attention. But during rehearsals his directions must be followed without question.

He must necessarily be a good actor, well-read, and quick-witted, and should possess at least a fair knowledge of technical stage craft. For he must know how to set the stage, to arrange entrances, exits, and the general business of each act.

He should be thoroughly *en rapport* with each character of the play, as he will be expected to instruct the actors in their several parts—in gestures, expression and "business." He must show them how to bring out the salient points, where to loudly thunder and when to gently coo; to speak rapidly or slowly; to sit or to stand; to pose or to walk about; to ges-

ticulate or to stand at ease. He must encourage the timid, check the bold, and keep the laggards at work.

The stage manager should have, moreover, a good eye for color, and, if wise, will strenuously insist that the characters be costumed according to his directions; else some astonishing effects will be produced. For instance, if one actress wears a close-fitting, dark red or black dress, and another a light, fleecy gown, the former will appear about ten feet high while the latter will, in juxtaposition, resemble a Dutch churn.

In arranging act endings, or tableaux as they are called, the stage manager must see that the characters are appropriately grouped so as to form a living picture, with the leading people at the centre of interest.

In amateur theatricals the stage manager is also "King of the Supers." In other words, he instructs those characters whose acting consists of "dumb show and noise." These characters, apparently so trivial, are in many plays vastly important, and frequently serve to make or mar a scene. If the "howling mob" forgets to howl, or the "ringing cheers" fail to ring; if the "veteran soldiers" march like school-boys, and the "merry village maidens" look glum; in short, if the supernumeraries fail to grasp the idea which their presence conveys, they will make the play and themselves alike ridiculous.

For this reason it is best, whenever possible, to avoid plays containing these characters. But if you must have them, let the stage manager resolve to drill them thoroughly. No half-way measures will do. The work must be systematically laid out, carefully gone over, and each "super" made to identify himself with the character assumed. It is tedious, thankless, exacting work. The scene must be gone over and over again until the business is thoroughly mastered, and the tendency toward clock-work action is removed. The representations

of surprise, fear, joy, sorrow, etc., must be varied, or the effect will be extremely laughable. One of the most ludicrous scenes in a certain popular burlesque was the concerted action of a dozen or more supernumeraries. The gestures of scorn, rage, defiance, etc., were made in unison, and the effect can better be imagined than described.

But it is in casting the plays that the stage manager will find the greatest demand for diplomatic skill. He must give up the idea of pleasing everybody, and depend instead upon his own judgment and common-sense. He should exercise the greatest care in selecting the various characters, giving particular heed to the peculiarities, tastes, experience and ability of each member. Personal feelings should have no weight in casting plays, since the manager's best friend may be a very indifferent actor.

When the cast is once made there must be no kicking over the traces. Those who have leading parts must understand that much is expected from them, and that only by hard, steady work can they do themselves or the play justice. The lesser lights should bear in mind that their parts in proportion are very important, and deserve thorough, careful study; remembering particularly that even the smallest rôle may be made a character if well done.

The stage manager will require a vast amount of tact, energy and discretion if he hopes to win success. He must know whom to coax and whom to scold; when to yield and when to be adamant; and, no matter what difficulties may arise, he must never own up beaten, but must find some way to get out of the tangle, so that the club may not lose faith in his ability.

He will find his patience sorely tried, and at times may imagine himself in Bedlam. But pluck will carry the day, and in due time the company will get into working order and all will go smoothly.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PROMPTER.

NEXT to the stage manager, the prompter is the most important man in an amateur dramatic club.

Combining as he often does the duties of prompter and property-man, his duties are manifold and tedious. It is his friendly voice that eases the pangs of stage fright, strengthens the doubtful, and gives confidence to the whole company.

He should be a non-actor of course, and moreover, a watchful, energetic and patient gentleman. He is expected to prompt the forgetful, issue the warning calls for entrances, and, in most amateur companies, to look after the properties and attend to whatever business is required in the wings.

All this requires judgment, so that especial care should be exercised in choosing a man for this responsible office.

The prompter will find it an excellent plan to note the characteristics of the several performers. He will thus discover that some will want but a single word, while others need half a sentence; some are letter perfect and require no aid, while others through nervousness, fright or over-study demand extra vigilance and constant prompting. By observing these peculiarities he will find his own work much easier, to say nothing of adding to the smoothness of the performance.

The prompt side is usually at the left of the stage, and the prompter takes his station at the front with a copy of the play, also "entrance," "scene," and "property plots." The properties should also be in his immediate charge, and iron-clad rules made prohibiting everybody from meddling with

them. The necessity for this will be shown by the following incident. I was doing *Legree* in "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and had been called for the last act, in which *Tom* is killed by a blow from *Legree's* whip; but no whip could be found, so I was obliged to go on empty-handed. In my dilemma I resolved apparently to kill *Tom* with a blow from the fist. Now it chanced that the actor who did *Tom* had "indulged" enough to become fighting drunk; so instead of dropping when I struck, he sounded a war whoop, "sailed in" and the curtain went down on a regular free fight! And all because somebody had misplaced a whip.

The "entrance plot" contains a list of entrances for each character, together with the properties required at each entrance. A convenient way to arrange it is to mark a number on the margin of the play book about a "length"—42 lines—before an entrance. A corresponding number, followed by the name of the character, is entered on a slip of paper. The next entrance has a different number; and so on throughout the play. This slip is handed to the call boy who stands beside the prompter. When a number on the margin is reached the prompter announces it; the call boy looks at his list, hunts up the characters under that number, announces the "call," gives the character the properties marked on the list, and returns at once to his position. This is continued until the end of the play. All properties must be returned to the prompter as soon as the scene is ended.

The "property plot" is a carefully itemized list of every article required in the play. It should contain first, all those articles which are to be upon the stage when the curtain rises; second, all articles to be carried on by the actors. The prompter should go carefully over his list and be sure that the stage is properly set before he "rings up." If he neglects this some very serious blunders will follow; the will, the money, the letters are not in the safe or desk; the result is

confusion and a ruined scene. The list of articles to be carried on by the actors must likewise receive careful attention; all the articles needed for this purpose should be at hand so that the call boy can deliver them promptly. Eternal vigilance is indeed necessary when handling properties.

If there is a shift of scenery in the play, then a "scene plot" is required. Amateurs rarely attempt anything very elaborate in scenic effects, therefore the scene plot need specify nothing more than the various drops, their location, etc., care being taken that the stage is set so that the drop will not fall upon the furniture. I once saw a street drop fall behind a couple at dinner, who doubtless shared the astonishment of the audience at finding themselves suddenly transferred to the middle of the king's highway.

The prompter should also write out the "music cues" for the leader of the orchestra, giving the words or business, the style of music required—whether grave or gay—and the necessary number of bars to be played.

During the performance he is expected to attend to all outside demonstrations, such as snapping whips, smashing dishes, ringing bells, blowing horns, firing guns, barking, howling, groaning, growling, cheering and yelling, besides looking after the thunder, lightning, rain and red fire. All this and much more is demanded of him, and he is expected moreover to keep his temper under any and all circumstances!

Small wonder then that the prompter is such an important individual, without whose careful, intelligent services it is almost impossible to give a good entertainment.

Select your prompter with care and when you get a good one strive to keep him, for his place is not easily filled.

CHAPTER V.

OTHER OFFICERS.

THE business manager is the responsible "outside man" of the club. He attends to the "front of the house," and, like the prompter, should be a non-actor.

His position is by no means a sinecure.

The business manager must see that the bills, posters and programmes are printed and distributed. This is an important matter, because a full house cannot be had unless the entertainment is properly "boomed," and it is certainly discouraging to play to empty benches.

Liberal advertising always pays. The newspapers should be "worked" for notices, suitable lithographs should be secured, while bills and programmes in liberal quantities must be circulated. It will be well to give this work personal attention in order to know that it is done thoroughly. Stock lithographs, suitable for a great variety of plays, may be purchased in most of the larger cities, and it will be wise to invest in a good assortment, to which date lines can be pasted. These posters and lithographs should be put up at least a week before the entertainment.

It is likewise the duty of the business manager to secure the hall, music, and necessary properties—a list of the latter being furnished him by the prompter. If seats are reserved he should look after the diagrams and tickets, and, by firmly suspending the free list, utterly rout the grand army of dead heads.

The gentleman who fills the office of secretary and treasurer has comparatively an easy time. He attends to the corres-

pondence, receives and pays all money, and assists the other officers in various ways. He may act or not as he chooses; but generally speaking it is best to have him a non-actor, as he should be in the box office during the performance.

The leader of the orchestra should be present during the final rehearsals to familiarize himself with the music cues.

It will be seen from the foregoing that the officers—particularly the manager and prompter—have highly important positions, and must needs be men of unusual ability. They should be given unlimited authority in their several departments, every member of the club promptly and willingly seconding their efforts. Success in amateur theatricals can only be achieved through concerted, harmonious work. From the moment that individual interests clash disintegration begins and the club speedily falls to pieces. Therefore bear and forbear, resolving that whatever comes you will do your part faithfully. In this way alone can you hope to win success.



CHAPTER VI.

THE PLAY.

PROBABLY no question creates more acrimonious discussion among amateurs than that of selecting the play.

The manager of a professional theatre ponders long and deeply before assuming the risk of a heavy play; but the average amateur is ready to tackle anything from tragedy to burlesque, without a thought of the consequences. Here, then, is the prime cause of many failures. And right here I want to impress one cold, hard fact in the minds of my readers.

Don't be too ambitious.

The masterpieces of dramatic composition, those grand works which have received years of patient study by the world's greatest actors, are utterly unfit for amateur clubs. Containing, as they invariably do, characters which require in portrayal the greatest histrionic art, characters wherein the grand passions of love, hate, jealousy and the like reach the climax of intensity, they demand for proper representation the genius of a Booth or a Cushman. There must be a wonderfully retentive memory to master the lines; a full and complete knowledge of stage craft and traditions, which can be had only by years of hard experience; a voice of rare power and exquisite culture; a mobile face; perfect ease in action; and the physical power to endure the strain. Some of these qualifications can be secured by proper application. If a man has the time and patience to study every word, tone, look and gesture; to learn the intricate "business;" to grasp the conception of the character in all its devious aspects—then, *perhaps*, if he has a good

physique and natural talents, he may reach a high dramatic altitude.

Supposing, however, that your club contains a "star" actor who, you are positively certain, can do a tragic rôle "better than lots of professionals," then in mercy to your other members do not make them ridiculous by hoisting your favorite into undue prominence. For the better he is the worse will the rest appear.

It is well to remember that a five-act play, requiring three hours in representation, demands an amount of mental and physical stamina possessed by few amateurs. What amateur for instance would be willing to rehearse four or five hours daily? Can the average amateur deliver blank verse properly? Can he render a long, passionate soliloquy without mouthing or drawling? Indeed, no. Bear these truths in mind then, and closet your classics unless you want to make your club a laughing stock.

The proper selection of plays will depend to a great extent upon your company. In any case two or even three short plays would be better than one long one. Very large casts are to be avoided. Somebody is always absent or late, and the larger the cast the greater the confusion. Taboo all plays having strongly pathetic male rôles. *Bob Brierly* in the "Ticket-of-Leave Man" is such a character, and not one amateur in a thousand can do it justice. Plays with quick action are better than plays with quick wit. It is better to do a common play well than an uncommon play badly. Avoid the "heroic" school. If you must have plays of three or four acts, select those with strongly contrasted characters, devoid of too much intensity. A comedy, if brisk and snappy, or a domestic drama may be the principal play, followed or preceded by a short farce or comedietta.

It should be borne in mind that the best actor in the club should be considered when choosing a play. If he is a light

comedian, select "Home," "Ours," "School," "Won at Last," and similar plays; while for comediettas or farces you may select "A Morning Call," "A Regular Fix," "Delicate Ground," "A Happy Pair," etc., etc.

For a low comedian there are plays—especially farces—without number. Irish, Dutch and negro characters, all more or less comical, figure in these extravagant affairs, and must be selected according to the taste or ability of your first low comedian. In the more ambitious plays the low comedian is of secondary importance as far as the story goes, although he often becomes, in the hands of a great actor, the star part. The rôle of *Eccles*, in "Caste," is a case in point. George Honey's exquisite art made this unsavory character the most striking figure in that charming comedy, and Joseph Jefferson's *Bob Acres* in "The Rivals," will long be remembered.

If the leading lady is strong in pathetic work she will find plenty of opportunities in such plays as "Lady Audley's Secret," "The Woven Web," "Daisy Farm," "Lost in London." If her forte is in bright sparkling work, select a play like "A Scrap of Paper," "The Woven Web," "Partners for Life," "School," or "Border Land."

The "heavy" man, who can play a villain gracefully and with proper spirit is often the best actor in many clubs. He will find good parts in "All that Glitters is not Gold," "The Woven Web," "Charity," and "By Force of Impulse."

The selection of plays must depend to a certain extent upon the scenery required. It is a manifest impossibility to produce upon a small stage any play requiring intricate and difficult setting. Interiors, of course, are easily arranged, but street scenes, woodlands, lakes, rivers, mountains and the like require special drops. This difficulty has been practically removed however by the paper scenery which may be purchased from any dealer in theatrical supplies. It is cheap, durable, effective, and suitable for all purposes.

I cannot too strongly impress upon amateurs the vital necessity for selecting plays suited to their talents and surroundings. Don't, don't, *don't* select difficult comedies nor high pressure melo-dramas unless you wish to tempt fate.

Some years ago the manager of an amateur company called on me with an urgent request to take the part of *Ruy Blas* in Hugo's famous drama of that name. The performance was to take place that night, and the leading man had sprained his ankle. It was already past seven o'clock, they had no understudy, and, to save a collapse, I consented. The performance must have been stupendous, judging by what I saw of it. Long practice had made me letter perfect in most of the lines, else the play had broken down a dozen times. The prompter's voice could not be heard beyond the wings, and I was constantly forced to prompt from memory. The gentlemen who played *Don Sallustio* and *Don Caesar* were not on speaking terms with their swords, over which they tripped and stumbled in the most amazing manner. The properties were mislaid, the supers wandered about as if dazed, and the *Princess* seemed afflicted with temporary loss of voice. The beautiful play, in short, was remorselessly butchered. Now that club had a good record, having produced many light dramas and comedies in a highly creditable manner. But "Ruy Blas" was too heavy, and failure was the inevitable result.

Pathetic plays are not suitable, as a rule, for amateurs. The step from the sublime to the ridiculous is very short, and when pathos becomes bathos the play is ruined. Most people would rather laugh than cry. We meet too much of sin and sorrow in daily life to thoroughly enjoy a lachrymal play. When suffering is represented it must arise from special, not general, causes. A feeling of angry resentment toward the villain must be mixed with pity for the victim. Herein lies the success of plays ranging from the magnificent "Two Orphans" to the threadbare "Uncle Tom's Cabin." The pity we feel for

Louise finds a counterpart in our pity for *Uncle Tom;* and our hatred for *Jacques* is the same as our hatred for *Legree.*

Strive to select plays which are neither all smiles nor all tears. It is the happy blending of light and shade that makes the great picture; and it is this same blending of joy and sorrow that makes the successful play.

Amateur actors are too fond of copying. They prefer to imitate rather than originate. Apropos of this, a certain club engaged me to "coach" its members in "East Lynne." This *recoco* play was selected because, forsooth, the leading lady wished to emulate Ada Gray as *Lady Isabel.* The young lady who attempted the exacting double rôle in the tearful concoction would have made an excellent *Polly* in "Caste," *Mary* in "Our Boys" or *Louise* in "The Woven Web;" but she was positively bad as *Lady Isabel* and superlatively awful as *Madam Vine.* The rest of the cast was but little better. The company was in deep water, and all the "coaches" living could not fit them to their parts.

Avoid trying conclusions with great actors in their favorite rôles. They have given years of study where you can give but days. The public never stops to consider this, hence you find yourself open to unfavorable comparisons.

What are known as "one part" plays are not desirable for amateurs. The rapacious professional "star" will have nothing else; but you must not be selfish. Choose plays having a sprinkling of good parts for all, and thus avoid those petty jealousies which wreck so many promising clubs.

The selection of plays rests of course upon the stage manager, and to his careful consideration this chapter is submitted.





CHAPTER VII.

CASTING THE CHARACTERS.

NOW for trouble!

It was hard work to organize the company; it was harder yet to select the play; but the climax of difficulty is reached in making the cast. It is a notorious fact that amateurs, particularly those who have had no experience whatever, always want to do leading business. Catch them playing "second fiddle" to anybody! No sir!

Strange fatuity.

When experience brings wisdom many of them will discover that instead of being able to enact *Romeo*, *Hamlet*, or *Othello*, they are barely able to do a servant with three lines.

This fact, consoling as it is, does not lighten the manager's burden. He must make a heavy draft on his stock of patience —for he will need it. There will be growling and grumbling all over the shop at the outset. The soubrette will declare that she should have been cast for the leading part, and the leading lady will be certain that the play selected hides her brilliant light under a bushel. The leading man will think his part weak, and the juvenile man will declare that his is "slush." The walking gentleman will growl because he has so little to do, the low comedian can see nothing funny in his lines; and so it will go throughout the entire cast. But the experienced manager will listen intently, look wise, give bland, ambiguous answers, and let the malcontents talk themselves dumb. Here is where diplomacy comes in. He will tell Mr. Smith, the

comedian, who wants to do heroics, that of course he *ought* to do leading business, but, in the play under consideration, what *could* they do without his admirable comedy work? And Miss Jones, who thinks her part unworthy of her transcendent genius, will be gravely informed that although the play is not up to her standard, yet by entering into the spirit of her part, by giving it her very best efforts, she can elevate it to her own level. He will agree as a matter of course with the juvenile man who thinks his part is "slush," but will smooth things over by telling him that in his deft, skillful hands the part will become pure comedy of the highest rank. In this manner one and all are satisfied, and soon working in harmony.

When casting the characters the stage manager should seek to impress the fact that each and every character is important; that however small any one part may appear it is really necessary to the proper development of the story, and that it must be acted in the best possible manner in order that the play may be balanced at all points.

It is true moreover, that the smallest part, in the hands of a true artist, may be made to contrast sharply with the most ambitious rôle; to equal if not surpass it in popular esteem. The principal reason for this is that in a small rôle one has more time to elaborate it; to analyze each line, word by word; to study the effect of various readings; to master every detail of business; in short, to work up an ideal character.

Intelligent people will readily understand that in casting a play the manager is frequently obliged to put aside all personal feelings in order that a proper distribution of parts may be had. And if the manager rigidly adheres to this principle, nobody has any right to complain.

Yet despite all this, if any members are not satisfied with their parts; if they will not be prompt and willing at rehearsals; if they fail to enter with hearty good-will into the spirit of the play; then let them leave the club at once, for

they will be of no earthly benefit. Certainly no level-headed manager will change a carefully selected cast to please a grumbling fault-finder. When a cast is once made the manager may be smooth as oil, but he should certainly be firm as Gibralter.

There can be no objection, indeed, to mutual concession; otherwise firmness becomes stubbornness—which is something very different. But changes may be avoided if the manager at the outset distributes the parts with due appreciation of the abilities of each performer. Amateurs, as a rule, should be given characters which are in accord with their several natures. Do not give a "tearful" rôle to a chatterbox, nor a pert, lively part to girl who is naturally reserved and quiet. Your dignified gentlemen will not do for low comedy, nor your happy-go-lucky young dare-devils for proud and "starchy" characters. The popular saying that you must "cut your coat according to your cloth" may well be applied to the work of selecting characters for amateur plays. Now and then persons may be found who are versatile enough to sink their own personalities, or at least to blend them with the characters assumed. But such ability is rare among the ranks of amateurs, and in the great majority of cases it will be advisable to follow the foregoing plan of selecting each one according to his personal characteristics.

Amateurs act for amusement. It is not with them a question of bread and butter. For this reason they should be entirely free from the petty jealousies and fierce rivalries too often seen in professional circles.

In closing this chapter let me admonish my friends that it is no child's play to arrange a first-class amateur entertainment. On the contrary, there is a considerable amount of downright hard work about it. But if you buckle down to your task and have any natural ability whatever, the obstacles will rapidly decrease and soon disappear. Then, although none may be rare actors, all may be fair actors, which will satisfy everybody.



CHAPTER VIII.

REHEARSALS.

IN the matter of rehearsals there are three rules of the utmost importance which should be committed to memory.

Be on time.

Be willing to learn.

Be up in your lines.

Observing the first rule will save a great deal of annoyance. It is exceedingly provoking to dance attendance on a careless actor who keeps the entire company waiting. Occasional delays are unavoidable. But lateness at rehearsals is the regular thing with many amateurs. It is boorish, ill-bred selfishness—something which no lady nor gentleman will be guilty of doing—to keep people waiting more than the customary ten minutes. Either be prompt or stay at home and let some self-respecting member have your part.

The second rule applies to all amateurs, but especially to those who are about to make their first appearance. Thorough and exhaustive study is not to be expected, but general details must be mastered, which can be accomplished only by careful attention at rehearsals. But directions should be made solely by the stage manager. If you have a scene which you think can be improved, call the manager's attention to it. Don't undertake to "boss things" yourself or you will defeat your purpose and in addition make yourself justly unpopular. No amateur wants to be instructed by one who has had no more experience than himself.

The third rule is imperative.

No effective rehearsing can be done until one and all are letter perfect. Stumbling about for lines, forgetting cues, neglecting "business" will invariably result in confusion, and therefore rehearsing under such circumstances is time thrown away. In this connection let us consider the best method of studying a part. It is a truism worth repeating, that nothing can be accomplished without application, and the amateur who lacks this quality will never be more than a "stick."

The first thing to do in the way of study is to read the entire play through, slowly and carefully, two or three times. This is absolutely necessary. You will thus catch the drift of the story, the development of character and the relation which your part bears to the others. You should remember that concentration is necessary. You must give your whole mind to the work. Half-hearted study will not do. Therefore fix your attention with unwavering purpose to the object in view.

Fix in your mind a conception of the character, and hold it constantly in view. This will aid you materially in giving a consistent rendering of the part.

When you sit down to study your part, make a firm resolution that nothing shall interfere with the task, and stick to it. Learn your part line by line, speech by speech. Don't neglect your cues, but master them as thoroughly as you do your own speeches. Review everything as you progress, and when you have the first act perfect then take up the second. Never leave a speech until you know that you have mastered it. Remember that one hour of steady application is better than half a day of idle drifting.

If, in your part, you are required to read a letter aloud, learn it by heart. You will thus be entirely independent of the prompter, and will not be caught napping should you by mistake receive a piece of blank paper. Moreover, it is difficult to read on the stage because of the glare from the footlights; and

in a daylight scene how absurd it is to see a performer bend down to the footlights to read a letter!

Let us suppose that we have selected the comedy of "Early Vows," and that the company is assembled at the appointed hour, all letter perfect and ready for business. Beginners ready! Ting-a-ling. Up goes the curtain. Hold on, my dear Susan. Don't begin speaking until the curtain is well up and the music has ceased. Tut, tut! Louder! The orchestra couldn't hear you. Don't be afraid of your voice. Let it out. That's better. Bless my soul, Sampson, that won't do. When you say—

"Wha—wha—what's that? Swearing?"

raise both hands. On the exclamation—

"Oh, Susan!"

drop your hands and go slowly left so that she can drive you right. That's immense. Now repeat the scene, please. Now we're getting on. Wait a moment, Sampson. When you exit with a side speech don't talk to the wings. Face the audience, and speak up. An "aside" is spoken but very little lower than ordinary. My dear Mr. Curtice, *don't* wander about so. Do be quiet. Louder, if you please, Miss Curtice. That's it. My dear Mr. Curtice, turn *toward* the audience, instead of *away* from it, and let the lapels of your coat alone. You must forget all about your hands and feet. You are doing splendily, Captain Winthrop, but really you must *not* read that letter from the book. It is a part of your lines which you must commit to memory. What is that, Miss Curtice? Postpone the love-making business until the night of the entertainment? No indeed! Please recollect that for the time being you are Miss Curtice and nobody else; that you are to do exactly what the scene requires, and that the "love-making business" is an integral part of the play. Very well. If you won't rehearse properly we must find some one who will. Don't

want to make a fool of yourself? My—dear—young—lady! If you consider love-making is foolish, you differ from all the rest of your adorable sex. Then you *will* rehearse? Thank you. Now, Captain, don't stand at arm's length, and don't hug her like a bear, either. Stand with your right side to the audience, place your left arm around her waist—so—and take her left hand in your right, drawing both up to your breast. There. Now when you say—

"This is comfortable!"

the audience will agree with you. Bravo! That was well done. Now proceed, please. Oh, stop, everybody! That quarrel scene is all wrong. You should come to the footlights all in line, then back to the rear, and repeat. Let everybody talk at once. "B-r-r-r! B-o-o-o! Yes sir! No sir!" That's it. Get up a regular whirlwind of excitement. Make people laugh? Of course. That's exactly what we want. Now try it. Ha, ha, ha! You're getting the idea.

And so on throughout the play.

Whew! Slow work, isn't it? You have been at it for two hours, and the first act is not yet finished. The stage manager looks warm and worried, the company is cross and flurried, and everything appears at sixes and sevens. Your hands and feet are obstrusive, your exits and entrances are ill-timed, you speak too fast or too slow, you fidget about, your gestures are ungraceful—indeed, everything seems chaotic. But to-morrow things will go better and then you can see that you have really made some progress.

If there is anything that will try the soul of man and the temper of woman more than a first rehearsal I have yet to discover it. But with pluck, patience and perseverance the Rubicon is soon passed and the way henceforth is easy.

I cannot condemn too strongly the habit of allowing the presence of outsiders at these rehearsals. It should be strictly

prohibited. Nobody aside from the company should be admitted under any pretext. No matter how kindly disposed these visitors may be, their presence is always annoying. It disconcerts the company, draws attention from the play, and consequently the rehearsal drags. Therefore it is best to make an iron-clad rule forbidding the admission of spectators at such times.

Another thing; the members of the company should keep silent except when actually rehearsing. Whispering, laughing, chattering, in front or in the wings, interferes seriously with the stage work, and should be studiously avoided.

The necessary properties should be on hand after the first or second rehearsal in order that the company may become familiar with them. This important matter is frequently neglected until the last moment, and some absurd makeshifts often result. You cannot give too much attention to these details, for it is on the sum total of little things that success depends.

For a play of average length at least half a dozen rehearsals should be held, and twice that number will do no harm. Indeed, in plays marked by rapid action and complicated business—like "A Scrap of Paper" for instance—a dozen rehearsals will be none too many. No conscientious stage manager will allow a play to be presented until all are perfect in lines and business. And this perfection can only be acquired through steady, patient, earnest rehearsals.

The final rehearsal should be a dress affair, with every detail of costume, properties, make-up and business carried out precisely as though playing before an audience. This is an absolute necessity, and in no case should be omitted. The groupings, tableaux, and minor details of business cannot be arranged without it; besides this it will bring to light many errors more or less glaring which otherwise would pass unnoticed. On the professional stage dress rehearsals are

considered necessary. On the amateur stage they are indispensable.

If you attempt a play of exceptional difficulty, I advise you to secure, if possible, the services of a professional actor to rehearse your company. It will be a good investment. He will set you right in endless details which the most astute amateur stage manager would overlook. He will post you on numerous bits of stage craft, and show you how to work up situations of telling effect, which otherwise would pass unnoticed. He will make-up your characters properly, give valuable advice about costumes, and in short, tide you over a difficult performance, helping you win success where otherwise you would meet with almost certain disaster. This advice applies only in extreme cases. With ordinary plays a level-headed stage manager, backed by a willing, earnest, painstaking company will be quite sufficient. But you must not shirk rehearsals, for it is only by this patient, steady work that successful entertainments can be given.



CHAPTER IX.

SOME ACTORS.

THERE are actors and actors.

Some are good, some are bad, and some are merely indifferent—the first grade being in a "vast minority" as a well-known manager once declared.

A classification of these various grades is worthy of careful study by the ambitious amateur.

First, there is the *careless* actor who delivers his lines in a hit-or-miss—usually miss—manner, and who occasionally may come within a mile or so of giving the proper cue. If your business requires you to announce his coming, with many anxious glances off R. U. E., he usually comes strolling on L. 1 E., which of course is highly entertaining to the audience. If he is required to rush in and seize the uplifted knife of the villain, he generally forgets all about it until the prompter refreshes his memory with a club. The chances are ten to one that he will forget to bring on the properties handed him by the prompter, and if he appears at the right moment or stands in the proper place on the stage it will show that the days of miracles have come again. Such is the careless actor. May his shadow grow beautifully less!

The *argumentative* actor is a well-known character. If you say that white is white he will undertake to prove that it is black. He agrees with nobody—not even himself. He will argue an inch off a million of miles, and split a hair a thousand times. He will prove by geometrical progression and the rule of three that you should gesticulate with the left hand

instead of the right, or the right instead of the left. No matter what you propose he at once advocates the opposite. Waste no words on him; let him severely alone; for he is a jackass, pure and simple, who can do nothing but kick.

The *officious* actor, like the *Admiral* in "Pinafore," "means well, but he doesn't know." He is a good-hearted, pompous, bustling fellow, who will do anything to gain even the slightest notoriety. Give him an inch and he will take a couple of miles. He uses the pronoun "I" with much gusto, and apparently is buried at all times under a load of overwhelming responsibility. The broadest hints are thrown away upon him, for his hide is thicker than that of the horned rhinoceros. His finger must be in every pie, and will be too, so long as he remains in your company.

The *dictatorial* actor creates endless trouble and is an unmitigated nuisance. His arrogance has no limit. He would instruct a Booth in tragedy or a Wallack in comedy. There is nothing shy nor retiring about him. He knows it all—in his mind—and wants that fact distinctly understood. He is usually the worst kind of a "stick" himself, but is blissfully unconscious of it. If you have the misfortune to admit such a member, the best you can do is to drop him without ceremony. While he remains there will be constant trouble which sooner or later will culminate in a general break-up. Get rid of him—gently if you can, forcibly if you must.

The *lazy* actor is another "terror." He is never on time, and never has his lines until the last moment. He keeps everybody waiting at rehearsals, and the long-suffering stage manager commits homicide mentally whenever he thinks of him. Usually the lazy actor has marked ability, and generally surprises everybody by his excellent acting on the night of the entertainment. Nevertheless, he is a thorn in the flesh since his lack of earlier application keeps back less favored members,

who, lacking his natural ability, are the real victims of his sluggishness. Keep the lazy actor to his work ; refuse to allow him to rehearse until he is letter perfect, and you will cure him—unless he is way beyond redemption.

The *grumbling* actor is an envious, disagreeable fellow, without a single redeeming quality. Nothing satisfies him. If he is left out in casting a play, it is because the rest are jealous. If given a part, it is unworthy of his transcendent genius. Don't hope to escape by giving him his choice of the characters, because in that case he will condemn the entire play. There is no pleasing him. If the house is light, he will growl at the empty seats ; if it is packed, he will grumble at the crowd. If people do not applaud, he dubs them senseless apes ; if they do applaud, he wishes they would stop their infernal racket. He is a bilious, uncomfortable hedgehog, with prickles always a-quiver. Such is the grumbling actor.

The *obstinate* actor is twin-brother to the last named. This cheerful creature sulks instead of grumbling. If everything is made subservient to his own sweet will ; if nobody else ventures to have an opinion ; if he is made Grand Mogul of the entire organization ; all will go well : otherwise prepare for war. At rehearsals he is an especial bugbear. Every detail of business must be exactly as *he* wants it, or, like a little child, he "won't play ! " Of course he must always have the best part, even though he has not the histrionic ability of a clam. He will endure no criticism—not even the most respectful hint. The climax of trouble with this fellow is usually reached on the very night of the entertainment, when he appears with some brand new crinkle, and positively refuses to go on unless you yield to his whim. Then he has you at his mercy ; but if he catches you again it is your own fault.

The *restless* actor is a sort of human teetotum, never at rest, but always on the whirl. It is almost impossible to make him stand still or sit quietly. His fidgety movements destroy many

effective scenes and unfit him for everything except an occasional low comedy part. He is usually the soul of good nature, and handy withal, so he may safely be cast for any trifling rôle in which there is little to do.

The *patronizing* actor is something of a cad. His airs of bland superiority, covert sneers and overweening self-confidence are very trying to the nerves and tempers of most people. He will say that your acting is very fair, sir, very fair, but not quite the thing, don't you know. The business in that scene might be passable in a small town, and with a second or third rate club; but really, it is not up to the standard, you see. That young lady, too, is quite clever, but really anyone of *his* experience would recognize the fact at once that she can never rise above mediocrity. He wants everybody to understand that he indulges in amateur theatricals only for mental relaxation. Why, bless you, if he should devote the powers of his massive brain to things theatrical, he could have the lead in any theatre. But as the field is already well filled, and as there are some fairly decent actors among the professionals, he does not wish to encroach! And so on, *ad nauseam*. Small wonder that he is unpopular.

The *excellent* actor! What a pleasure it is to think of him, and what a pity it is that his name is not legion! He is the joy of the stage manager's heart, for he accepts his alloted part without grumbling. He recognizes the fact that whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing well; so he studies his part with the utmost care. He strives to grasp the author's meaning, to gain a clear conception of the character, and thereby give a finished, consistent rendering of the rôle. He masters the text at the earliest possible moment, and is letter perfect at rehearsals. He attends to his own affairs, interferes with nobody, listens carefully to the stage manager's instructions and carries them out in detail. He is polite, courteous, obliging, and always seeking to improve his work. He makes it a

matter of duty to attend every rehearsal, and arrives promptly at the appointed hour. During rehearsals he attends strictly to business, indulges in no "skylarking," and strives to do as good work as though the lights were on and the auditorium packed. His make-up and costumes are correct, and he plays *to* not *at* the audience. Every club has its excellent actor, and the pity is that each member does not belong to his class.

The ladies—but here, bless their dear hearts, the pen of criticism loses its point. Yet, as a work of this sort must be thorough and impartial, I shall have to refer to their little foibles, though I do write with a club.

The *talkative* actress insists on exercising her vested rights in and out of season. She chatters in the wings, in front, and on the stage. She annoys the other characters, irritates the manager, and drives the prompter to the verge of distraction. Her nimble tongue causes her to forget her own lines, entrances and business, and prevents others from remembering theirs. A change of costume for her invariably means a stage wait, for, bless your heart, she cannot dress and talk at the same time—and really she *must* talk, you know! Looks and hints are thrown away upon her, for she is unconscious that she is inciting a riot; and as nobody wants to be severe with such a delightful little chatterbox, they all grin and bear it. Finally, in desperation, the stage manager "puts his foot down," whereupon she "gets her back up," there is a flourish of dainty cambric, tears, criminations and a regular "old time" all around. There is no danger of *ennui* in a club where she holds forth.

The *giggling* actress is worse yet. She remarks "te he!" and chews gum with equal volubility. This young woman takes nothing seriously. She would consider *Hamlet's* interview with the *Ghost* excrutiatingly funny, and would giggle approvingly during the death of *Little Eva*. In spite of her pertness she has no versatile qualities and is always the same

in whatever she undertakes. She can be trusted with nothing but the most *outré* soubrette rôles, and not even then if she is required to be on the stage during any serious business. The stage manager may plead, argue, storm or threaten; but it will do no good. Her case is hopeless. She *will* giggle, and she *will* chew gum. And that settles it.

In contradistinction to the above we have the *tragic* actress, who imagines herself an embryo Anderson. She pitches her voice at the deepest alto, on and off the stage, and fairly jars her back teeth whenever she speaks. Being built on a generous plan she longs for heroic rôles, and is the bane of the manager because of her anxiety to do *Catharine* or *Lady Macbeth*—characters in which she would be an utter and ridiculous failure. She is usually the worst "stage struck" member of the company, and nothing short of a trial on the professional stage will cure her of her folly. When she learns by bitter experience that there is no royal road to acting she will either give up in disgust or by pluckily sticking to her task climb to fame by the common ladder of all-around work.

The *vain* actress is the most troublesome of all, and any club burdened with such a one has my heartfelt sympathy. Her silly affectation would be amusing if it were not annoying. Her airs and graces outshine those of old John MacBride's famous daughter; and, like that celebrated damsel, she would have you to know that you "do yourself an honor" whenever you request her to assist in your plays. When she takes a part—and you may be sure she never lets a chance go by—it is always done with an air of the greatest condescension. She takes particular pains to let people know that it is a special favor on her part which she grants only because you could find nobody else who could do the character justice. It would show lady-like qualities and good breeding to be prompt at rehearsals, therefore she is always late! And during rehearsals she makes everybody uncomfortable by her endless whims.

Her costumes are whatever her own sweet will dictates, no matter how widely they may differ from the directions of the stage manager, or even from the author himself. Her insufferable pride effectually prevents her from accomplishing any really good work in the ambitious rôles which in her egregious vanity she insists on attempting. Her disagreeable qualities are such that it is a relief to forget her.

The *excellent* actress is charming. She has all the good qualities of the excellent actor, combined with womanly tact, grace and wit. She is always prompt and ready; always kind, thoughtful and willing. She does her best whether her rôle may be lead or utility. She works for general more than individual success, and is happily free from every trace of envy, spite or vanity. She is a prime favorite on and off the stage and bears her honors with a proper spirit.

The above characters are not imaginary. They represent a few of the many types which I have met time out of mind during my theatrical experience. If my remarks in certain cases seem harsh, please remember that, being true, they are just; and that in every instance the characters described are taken from life. If the cap fits any reader I advise that it be worn faithfully, to the end that wisdom may be gained, faults eradicated, and the ranks of the "excellent" class swelled to repletion.

Such is the purpose of this chapter.

And now, having done theorizing, I will return once more to practical matters, and consider the great question of "acting," in all its numerous forms.

CHAPTER X.

ON ACTING.

THE great principles of acting never vary. The art of concealing art follows the same lines in farce and in tragedy, because the true actor has the chameleon-like quality of blending his own personality with surrounding objects. Anyone who has seen Edwin Booth in "Henry VIII." and "Taming of the Shrew" will appreciate this. In the first he is *Wolsey*—the grave, dignified, proud, revengeful and ambitious Cardinal—full of mighty schemes and vast enterprises; a smileless man, merciless in his hate, limitless in his greed, but magnificent even in the end of all his greatness. When the curtain again rises, he becomes *Petruchio*—that merry, reckless dare-devil—unique, surprising, who has no fellow among the mighty bard's creations. Listen to his merry quilp and jest. See him bully his servants, his friends and his wife. Observe the fact that you are at all times in his confidence. You know that his swash-buckler style is assumed, and that in reality he is a gentleman masquerading. Yet in spite of all this you are amazed at the apparent naturalness of voice, look and gesture. You strive in vain to find a single trait of the lordly Cardinal of an hour ago. This, then, is the triumph of genius—the acme of histrionic art. His own personality disappears, and for the time being he is to all intents and purposes another man, swayed by different emotions, changed in actions, looks and voice.

Although no amateur can expect, with his limited oppor-

tunities, to sink his own personality in this manner, yet he can, if he will, give consistent, natural renderings of such characters as come within the scope of his powers.

The whole art of acting is summed up in the two words—*action* and *expression.*

The two are so closely interwoven that at times it is impossible to separate one from the other. Yet there is a distinct difference between them which is more clear when I say that action conveys the idea of force, expression that of feeling. *Othello's* wild outburst which culminates in dashing *Iago* to the ground is typical of the former, while his splendid soliloquy—"Put out the light"—in its quiet, awful intensity shows the greatness of expression.

Muscular actors, of the Forrest school, depend chiefly upon action for effect. But nowadays more study is given to expression. This is particularly true of the modern society play—which, some critics assert, contains no opportunities whatever for acting.

One grave fault with many amateurs is that they gesticulate too much—especially with the forearm. Gestures, when made at all, should be free and bold. An excellent way to acquire this full arm movement is to practise before a large mirror. This will not only serve to check all clumsy, awkward half gestures, but will give you some excellent ideas of facial expression.

The smaller your part the greater study you can give it. I am aware that many amateurs foolishly look upon such a part as unworthy of attention, and if played at all it is in a half-hearted, perfunctory manner. This is silly; nay, more—it is unworthy of yourself, your company and your audience. You have no right to slur any character, especially a small one. A seemingly trifling rôle may be made, by careful elaboration, to stand out as one of the most important features of the play,

winning you far more praise than you would get in a more ambitious but less carefully studied part.

When you have mastered your lines and thoroughly understand the general scope of the character which you are to represent, you should then set to work to make the rôle distinctively your own—fitting yourself to it like a glove. Suppose it is a servant; the lines will indicate whether he is artful, sly, honest, dishonest, impudent, respectful, bright, stupid, quick, slow, etc.; then, whatever his characteristics may be, strive to put them on as you would an overcoat, entirely concealing your own nature however opposite it may be. Endeavor literally to "step into the shoes" of whatever character you assume, for in that way alone can you hope to give a smooth, finished performance. Remember, too, that every word and movement are important, as they serve to develop not only your character but likewise that of the play. Therefore, nothing, however trivial it may appear, should be lightly passed over. The chief delight in an amateur entertainment is not in the superior work of any one member, but in the general excellence of the entire company.

If every actor would commit to memory *Hamlet's* advice to the players and take that advice to himself, there would be fewer marionettes on the boards. "Suit the action to the word, the word to the action!" How simple, and yet how few do it. On rare occasions the action precedes the words. *Macbeth* clutches at the visionary dagger before he speaks, and *Cassius* indulges in considerable business before commencing the famous quarrel with *Brutus*. Occasionally the action and words are simultaneous, as when *Richelieu* in his defense of *Julie*, hurls defiance at his shameless king. But in the great majority of cases, action follows the words. The necessity for this lies in the fact that it enables the audience fully to comprehend the meaning of the words. *Macbeth's* frenzied cry "Lay on, Macduff!" is the signal for the mighty

struggle in which his life and fortune are wrecked. Action must be neither forced nor constrained. It should be at once decided, bold and vigorous, remembering at all times to vary the degree of intensity according to character and surroundings. What might be a trivial action in one scene, would be powerful in another. When *Sir Edward* in the "Morning Call" lifts the handkerchief from the face of *Mrs. Chillington*, it causes unalloyed merriment; but the effect is far different when *Ruy Blas* picks up the handkerchief of the haughty *Don*. In any scene of intense interest the action should rise gradually to the climax where it may burst out with a force and fury which at another time would be simply ludicrous. Never pose nor attitudinize. It is stilted, affected and unmanly, and is indulged in only by simpering idiots of the "lady-killing" type of actors. It stamps the actor as a brainless egotist, and justly holds him up to the ridicule of all sensible people. Don't hurry the action. At times, of course, you must be quick and vigorous; but always allow the necessary time for by-play and business.

Pay especial attention to the fact that you are playing *to* the audience instead of *at* it. Your business is with the people on the stage and not with the people in the audience. Your interests are entirely with the former; you have nothing in common with the latter. Ignore, then, their presence as completely as if they were mere shadows. Bury yourself in your part, and strive to be in fact the character whose name you bear. Your success in this will mark your success in acting. You must not forget, however, that the stage is the frame of a living picture of which you form a part. Therefore your every act should be rendered with this object in view; that all you say and do be so clearly accomplished that the audience will at once grasp your meaning. This necessitates clear and correct delivery, gestures, business and by-play. In this connection I cannot condemn too strongly the habit—which I

have observed among both professional and amateur actors—of "holding the stage" at the rear; in other words, of remaining up the stage and forcing others to turn their backs to the audience. It is a selfish, or at least a thoughtless action, which sadly mars the beauty of the scene, although it may draw undeserved attention to the offending person. Keep well down the stage unless the action of the play requires your presence elsewhere.

Amateurs will hardly care for a profound analytical criticism on the art of acting. Yet every amateur will find certain accomplishments necessary in order to give a finished representation of any character. These should be carefully studied and thoroughly mastered. Mind you, I do not pretend that any book, be it never so complete, can make you an actor. It can, at best, only point out the right course, and perhaps keep you from straying into that rocky road of "high art" where you are certain to stumble and fall.

People of education and refinement—and I take it for granted that all amateurs belong to this class—have usually all the qualifications necessary for doing "society characters,"—such, for instance as appear in some modern "farces," where, instead of acting, the characters do nothing but sit, or stand, or loll, and talk, talk, talk. In pieces of this sort society people, having even the faintest idea of stage craft, can make a very creditable showing.

Most amateurs know something of music, dancing and French; and the more one is skilled in these polite accomplishments the better it will be. A knowledge of both vocal and instrumental music is especially desirable. I recollect that the late Mr. Wallack was once required to sound a call on the cornet. Now the divine John Lester could roar out a song with the best of them, but alas, he could not play the cornet. So he had his cornetist, a fat-witted German, stand in the wings ready to "toot" at the proper moment. Mr.

Gilbert stood beside him and when Wallack placed the cornet to his lips he turned to him saying:

"All ready!"

"Eh? Vot you say, eh?" inquired the Teuton.

"Blow your confounded horn!"

"Ven shall I plow him, eh?"

"Now,—— you!" roared Gilbert.

"So?" and out came the notes. Meanwhile Mr. Wallack had put down the cornet remarking that it was out of order. Just then the German's cornet sounded, and the house was convulsed.

Singing is absolutely necessary in many plays, and the actor who cannot vocalize will be barred from many good parts.

Dancing is such a general accomplishment that I hardly need mention it here further than to say that the amateur who cannot dance should learn to at once as he will frequently have need of the art.

French, at least a smattering of the language, is exceedingly useful. It will prevent numerous awkward slips and blunders; and surely nothing grates upon the ear of an educated person more than to hear some familiar French word or sentence cruelly butchered.

Fencing, which has no equal as a graceful exercise, is practically unknown in this country except in the larger cities. It is an art that should be cultivated, for, aside from its healthfulness, it is essential to numerous plays. Sword play on the stage is done entirely for effect; therefore a few lessons from a skillful teacher will give you enough rudimentary knowledge for all practical purposes. You will have no occasion to rival the splended swordmanship of Mr. Booth; but you should learn that the weapon is not held like a jack-knife, that you do not walk astride the scabbard, carry the blade under your arm nor seize it with both hands when you make a lunge.

The proper management of the voice requires special con-

sideration. Gestures and facial expression will do for pantomime, and are valuable aids in drama. But in the latter, vocal expression must have precedence.

Actors always read their lines—first from the book or manuscript, and afterwards from memory. Speaking differs from reading inasmuch as it is spontaneous, and therefore unstudied. And here again the art of acting appears; for the accomplished actor delivers his lines in a natural, unstudied manner, which forces the listener to believe that the words are uttered on the spur of the moment. Thus illusion becomes realism, and the art which produces the effect is not observed. But mere elocution must not be confounded with acting. One may recite "The Vagabonds," "Little Hero," "Ostler Joe" or "*Aux Italiens*" superbly, and yet be a most inordinate "stick" as an actor, A recitation may be fiery, impassioned, bold, descriptive, grave, gay or pathetic; but it is influenced by no surrounding objects, there is no illusion, and consequently only a surface effect, a mere wave ripple, is produced. Yet a knowledge of elocution is beneficial provided one can apply it.

To deliver well one must thoroughly understand the construction of sentences, together with the meaning and effect of pauses, inflection and emphasis, in order that sound and sense may not be hopelessly jumbled.

In considering the value of *pauses*—the comma, semi-colon, period and the like—you cannot be governed by any fixed laws of punctuation or grammar. The voice may dwell on a comma; it may or may not fall at the period; and it may rise, fall or dwell on the interrogation point. The latter, indeed, is a stumbling-block over which the unwary often trip. This mark may be at the end of a long sentence, only a part of which is interrogative, and if the rising inflection is sustained throughout, it is wearisome alike to speaker and listener. Generally speaking the voice rises when a favorable

answer is expected; but, if the questioner expects an adverse answer, the voice falls.

Inflections are used to convey a host of different meanings. They are either rising, falling, or compound. The upward inflection has reference to some question, entreaty or disbelief; the downward inflection refers particularly to command or assurance. The compound inflection is a combination of the two. Thus, the rising: "Is it yours?" The falling: "It is not." The compound: "Give it up, or I shall force you."

Emphasis, which is allied to inflection, gives strength and variety to what otherwise would be dull, commonplace monotone. It requires nice handling, since it may be made to convey a great variety of different meanings. Thus:

"*You* said that?"

indicates surprise, doubt or wonder; while

"You *said* that?"

shows contempt at *saying* instead of *doing*.

"You said *that?*"

indicates either amusement, admiration, curiosity or anger as the case may be.

I have no intention of furnishing a complex set of oratorical rules, since they are always confusing and misleading. Archbishop Whately's rule, "Be natural," is the simplest and best. Yet naturalness is the result of art, since art copies nature. When an actor is simply himself he may be natural enough so far as his own individuality goes; but in that he deserves no credit, for he displays no art and does no acting; he merely gives a parrot-like rendering of familiar words, and as he is in one play, so he is in all.

The voice undoubtedly requires cultivation. But as the amateur actor will find a severe course of study impracticable, I will limit myself to a few necessary observations. In the first place, it is better to speak too loud than too low; and the

voice should be pitched in a key slightly higher than that of the ordinary conversational tone. You will find upon trial that it is much easier to lower than to raise the key. The acoustic properties of theatres vary to a great extent and I have often been forced, when acting on a strange stage, to pitch my voice at a higher key in order to fill the auditorium. Practice then, from the outset, in a moderately loud and high voice. The ordinary drawing-room tone would be inaudible beyond the front rows of even a small theatre. Don't fear to "speak up." If you should attend a rehearsal at any regular theatre you would imagine that the actors were shouting; yet at night, before a full house, their voices sound easy and natural. Clearness of enunciation is better than mere volume of sound. Ranting and roaring produce much sound and little sense—a fault to avoid carefully. If you have a bit of intense work, don't ruin it by "tearing a passion to tatters." Noise is not power. The thunder rolls and rattles, but the deadly lightning is silent. Restrained emotion is at times far more effective than the most violent outburst. The late Charles R. Thorne had no equal in this. The tremendous scene which ends the fourth act of "Led Astray" culminates in the words:

"Shame for shame—we are quits!"

Mr. Thorne, as *Count Rodolph*, was in the habit of speaking these words in a stage whisper; and yet so great was the interest and so fixed the attention that every breath was hushed and every ear strained to catch the words, which seemed to float to the topmost gallery seat.

Repose in action is always necessary to a finished performance. It preserves the unity of impression without which you seem to be doing exactly what you are—acting; and that is precisely what you, of all things, want to avoid. Take the necessary time for your words, action and business, so that the audience can grasp the situation and understand the nature

of the scene. This they cannot do if the words are rattled off at express speed, and business and by-play confusedly mixed.

Never interrupt another unless it is so indicated by your lines. Allow the person addressed to finish before you speak. Consider the laws of good society in this respect, and act accordingly. You know what he has to say but your auditors do not, and any feverish anxiety on your part to speak makes the scene mechanical.

In playing comic parts you should be careful to avoid exaggeration, lest you make the character a burlesque. Quiet humor is always more effective than noisy mirth. Rare old John Gilbert, with his suppressed mirth, would convulse an audience, and Stuart Robson's guileless innocence is a sovereign remedy for the blues. It is characteristic of all great comedians that they never descend to mummery. The amateur comedian, in his eagerness to win a laugh, frequently overdoes it and excites derision instead of mirth. Too much color in acting, like too much paint in "making-up," destroys the effect. Farcical characters are more elastic and will bear a certain degree of exaggeration; but even in farce—unreal and ridiculous as it is—Nature must not be entirely ignored. In comedy we see life as it is, with its love, faith, hope, hypocrisy, greed and pessimism; in farce we deal entirely with imaginary circumstances in which motives and actions are more or less distorted. Thus caricatures are allowable so long as they are not absolute distortions.

As I have previously observed, pathetic rôles are exceedingly difficult to handle. Such a character must be done with the utmost nicety or it will arouse laughter instead of tears. Pathos requires close application, in addition to the natural gift of feeling what you say. One of *Brierly's* speeches in the "Ticket-of-Leave Man" runs as follows:

"Go home, my lad—go home with her—be a son to her—love her as she has loved thee. And when you're a man

grown, and her chair at the chimney-corner is empty, you may, perhaps, remember this day, and be thankful you took the advice of poor, hunted-down, broken-hearted Bob Brierly."

Let any amateur with a penchant for pathetic business try the above, and I warrant he will find that the "tearful" voice will not come at his bidding, and that he will understand why, in doing *Brierly*, I found this speech more difficult than all the others. No amateur who has made any reputation as a comedian should, under any circumstances, attempt to play a character of this sort. People expect him to be funny, and will insist that he shall be funny whether or no.

Ladies as a rule have quicker perception and livelier sympathy than the "lords of creation." Add to this an innate ability to dissemble successfully, a livelier imagination, and we readily see why, in society plays at least, they outshine the sterner sex. In plays where serious or pathetic work is required, the suggestions previously made apply equally well to both sexes. Ladies whose *forte* lies in comedy should cultivate the gift. Tears may excite our sympathy, but we like best the girl who brings sunshine instead of shadow. We soon weary of the unhappy *Hermione*, but we never tire of the merry *Perdita*. But ladies who do comic parts cannot always "look pretty." *Belinda* in "Our Boys" wears a shabby gown and torn apron; her hands and face are dirty and she has a generally "mussed up" look. The character, however, is uproariously funny, and is sure to make a hit if the young lady who does it has more artistic pride than vanity.

In conclusion, let me advise you to study people as you study parts. Observe the habits and peculiarities of your acquaintances, and you will discover many choice bits and tricks of voice and gesture which may be worked into your parts with excellent effect.

CHAPTER XI.

THE PASSIONS.

NO one can hope to act well without knowing how to represent the various feelings by which the mind is influenced. The principal dramatic passions are admirably illustrated in "Collins' Ode on the Passions" which I advise every amateur to commit to memory, and recite before a large mirror, carefully observing the effect. Too much study cannot be given this branch of the dramatic art. It is not enough to know that we frown when angry, smile when pleased, and elevate the eyebrows when surprised. We must consider every look, gesture and modulation of voice which accompany the emotion, and strive to express them as we would do in real life under similar circumstances. In this way alone can we avoid the extremes of over-acting on the one side and tameness on the other—errors alike fatal to artistic work. No correct representation of emotion can be given unless you are *en rapport* with your assumed character—opening your heart and actually feeling its joys and sorrows, hopes and fears. You cannot express what you do not feel. If you have no feeling, you will make a very poor actor; if you have no expression, you will make no actor at all.

It is obviously impossible to arrange a play by rote to emotions as the words of a song are set to music; yet as there can be no music without harmony, neither can there be acting without emotion.

I submit herewith a critical review of the greater and lesser

passions, showing, so far as mere words can do, the best methods for giving them expression.

Anger is always indicated by excitement, either suppressed or boisterous—usually the latter; rapid speech, harshness, a loud voice and frequent interruptions are noticed; the body bends forward, the head is shaken or nodded in a threatening manner, the eyebrows are drawn down, the forehead scowls, the eyes glare, the mouth is open, showing the teeth, and the whole facial expression is hard and savage, the degree varying with the intensity of feeling; the breast heaves, breathing is strained, the fist is raised in a threatening manner, and if the fit of anger is intense the whole body fairly quivers with rage.

Anxiety is shown by nervousness, quick speech, strained attention, drawn eyelids and marked uneasiness; the actor is restless, strides about hastily and stops abruptly; the voice is variable; sometimes it is a mere whisper, and again it is loud and shrill.

Attention requires a steady position, a thoughtful, intent look, with eyes fixed upon the ground or raised in an inquiring but respectful manner to the speaker.

Admiration differs with the object; if of a person, it shows esteem and wrapt attention; there is a desire to please, and the entire bearing is that of fond respect. If the object is other than personal the tone is loftier, more rapturous, and not unmixed with wonder.

Affectation is an art in itself, as it often dominates a character throughout an entire play, as, for instance that of bravery by *Bob Acres* in "The Rivals." Affectation of youth, as *Beau Farintosh* in "School," apes the costumes and manners of young men, endeavors to be sprightly, forgetful of rheumatism and stiff joints, commits endless blunders through defective hearing and vision, and makes the person ridiculous in a thousand ways. Affectation of culture leads to many laugh-

able errors, as when the "critics" in "Peg Woffington" show their ignorance. Affectation of great learning, such as that of *Dr. Pangloss* in the "Heir-at-Law" gives a pompous, egotistical bearing to the person coupled with much asinine gravity and slowness of speech. Do not mistake affectation for pretense. In "London Assurance" the elder *Courtley* is all affectation, while the ministerial bearing of the younger *Courtley* in the fourth act is all pretense. Both affectation and pretense should be slightly overdrawn, as they are caricatures of nature and must be so represented to be at all effective.

Arguing, without excitement, is conducted in a cool, unimpassioned manner, the gestures being few and simple, the voice calm and clear; if heated, the argument becomes livelier, the voice rises, the gestures are emphatic, the action excited and quick.

Authority requires a firm, decisive tone, a touch of pride and, in some cases, of arrogance; the body is held erect, and gestures should be very rarely used.

Affirming, as on oath, is done either standing or kneeling. The hand and eyes are raised, the voice is slow and impressive.

Boasting requires an egotistical, self-sufficient air of vast superiority; the walk is a swagger, the voice loud and contemptuous; if of affected courage, as in a quarrel, the voice is loud and threatening, accompanied by great bluster and blow; the gestures are overdrawn, everything being done to frighten the opponent into believing that the boaster is a dangerous man instead of a bully and a coward.

Commanding shows an erect figure, head well up, voice and gestures quick, firm, decisive as if admitting of no contradiction; the bearing is that of conscious power and should be graceful and dignified.

Courage is much like *commanding* except that the gestures

are fewer and the speech is slower; the look is calm, steady and bold, the voice strong and clear.

Condemning, if angry, like *Parkhurst* in "The Woven Web," assumes a severe look, the tone is sharp, the bearing stern; the hand is raised, fingers pointing at the person addressed, brows drawn, and lips compressed; if in sorrow, (*Gibson*, in "Ticket-of-Leave Man") the voice is grave, but firm, and not unmixed with pity.

Curiosity has a lively, expectant look; the eyes are opened widely, lips parted—the entire bearing that of pleased attention.

Defiance is uttered in a loud, ringing voice accompanied by quick, impetuous gestures. The tones are high and rapid, the attitude bold and fearless.

Denial is uttered in grave, measured tones; the left arm is crossed over the bust, the right hand, with open palm, is directed toward the person addressed, and the face is turned away.

Despair, like *anger*, varies with the depth of feeling which you are required to portray; if utterly hopeless, as when *Shylock* hears the final judgment rendered, the head sinks upon the breast; the forehead is clouded, the teeth set; the hands are clinched, and the arms, at first bent at the elbows afterwards hang listlessly at the sides, while the whole figure seems to droop and lessen; if joined to desperation, such as *Richard III* feels in his battle with *Richmond*, the appearance is that of incarnate fury; the head is bent forward, the eyes stare, the upper lip is drawn back, showing the teeth, while the voice is a wild, passionate scream, like that of some fierce, maddened animal.

Desire is expressed by bending forward, and reaching out with the hands as if to grasp the desired object; the look is half-smiling, but eager, and sometimes covetous; the voice is

cheerful but slightly doubtful, and the tones though rapid are broken by frequent pauses.

Death is very dificult to exhibit properly unless it be instantaneous; and even then the death-fall is a trick requiring a vast deal of practice. Death may be slow, as in "Hamlet," or sudden, as in "Othello;" and a comparison of Mr. Booth's methods in the two plays will be of special interest. In *Othello* death is supposed to result from a self-inflicted dagger thrust. In Mr. Booth's portrayal there is a frightful, convulsive shudder, a choking gasp, and then a dead, silent fall, without rebound or contortion. *Othello* dies instantaneously, and all motion ceases the instant that the blow is inflicted. *Hamlet* dies from the prick of a poisoned sword. His death therefore is slow, compared to that of *Othello*, and is accompanied by terrible suffering. Mr. Booth presents this with awful realism. There is rage, madness, inarticulate cries, a quivering of the limbs, a clutching at the throat, blindness, convulsion and death.

Envy has a spiteful, malevolent look; the tone is sneering, the voice rather high, the attitude strained and contemptuous.

Fear, if combined with sudden surprise, draws down the eyebrows, opens the mouth, and gives the whole figure a wild, startled look; the elbows are pressed to the sides, hands raised, palms outward, as if to ward off danger, while the knees tremble and the body shrinks away from the dreaded object; comic fear, as in farcical plays, is simply a caricature of the real sensation, and is shown by exaggerated gestures, chattering teeth, halting speech, ridiculous cries and protestations.

Fatigue is shown by an appearance of general weariness in the whole body; the head droops, the arms hang down, the feet shuffle rather than walk, and the voice is weak and faltering.

Folly, as seen in stupid or clownish characters, gives the

face a dull, vacant expression ; the insolent stare of the lout, and the silly grin of the zany are characteristic.

Fainting should be done quietly ; all movement ceases and the person sinks down limp and helpless.

Grief, if sudden, may arise from a variety of causes, such as death of friends or relatives, loss of property, or misfortune of any sort ; it is frequently a complex passion, being mixed with rage, hate, resentment and the like ; hence it is exceedingly difficult to represent properly. Sudden grief may be shown by clutching at the hair, catching the breath, wringing the hands, weeping, raving, sobbing, passionate entreaty or fierce denunciation ; *Shylock's* grief at the flight of *Jessica* is a splendid illustration of this complex passion.

Gravity is seen best in an air of quiet dignity ; there are no gestures ; the carriage is upright, firm, and somewhat authoritative ; the speech is slow and clear, the tone moderate and steady.

Gratitude shows an aspect of joy and satisfaction ; if the favor is extraordinary—such as granting life or liberty—the face lights up with effusive joy, the knee is bent, and the right hand pressed upon the heart, in token of sincere feeling.

Hope differs from mere desire in this—that *desire* longs for something, but doubts the fulfillment of its wish ; with *hope* there is very little doubt and no anxiety. Hope gives the countenance a bright and cheerful look ; the eyes sparkle ; the lips are parted in a half smile ; the body leans slightly forward, arms spread, hands open, and the voice has an eager, happy ring.

Hate is usually a single passion, though sometimes mingled with *fear* or *anger ;* but the latter are sudden passions, while *hate* is always deep-seated. *Richelieu* is angry at *Mauprat*, he fears the conspirators, but he hates *Baradas* with all his soul. Hate, if unaffected by other passions, is intense, bold, provok-

ing and domineering; the gestures repulse, the hands are clinched, the eyes flash, the voice is harsh and loud, the tone chilling, unequal and surly.

Hypocrisy should never be self-evident; in the presence of others the hypocrite is apparently an open-hearted, frank, generous, upright gentleman; among his friends "honest *Iago*" seems to be a prince of good fellows and the soul of honor; he carries out this deception until the last, and it is only in his soliloquies that the mask is withdrawn.

Impudence is brisk, lively, and totally unconscious of any person's starch and dignity; indeed, this trait is best seen in plays where these extremes meet. In "London Assurance" for instance, *Dazzle's* refreshing impudence is a pleasant foil to *Sir Harcourt's* arrogant pride. Never let impudence be overdone, or it becomes buffoonery and the effect is spoiled.

Intoxication varies according to nature. Some men get "fighting drunk," some are silly, some jolly, others brutal. In comedies and farces drunken characters are invariably comic; the eyes leer, the movements are uncertain; speech is broken by hiccoughs and the words are jumbled; mock gravity or dignity is often a feature. Most actors overdo a drunken scene, burlesquing parts which really require the nicest handling to be effective. In some cases—notably, the drunken scene in "David Garrick," where the great actor pretends to be intoxicated—caricature is permissible; but otherwise it should be strictly avoided.

Infirmity, as of old age, is seen in shrunken cheeks and hollow eyes, deafness, poor eyesight, trembling limbs, unsteady walk and considerable coughing; the voice is a shrill, childish treble, often tart or peevish.

Joy differs from contentment in being a sudden transport, as of hope realized; it is indicated by glad cries, clapping the hands and dancing about, as if beyond restraint; the counte-

nance is smiling and excited, the voice uneven, the tones frequently loud and high.

Jealousy is perhaps the most difficult of all the passions to portray; it is a medley of emotions all at variance with one another, and all of which must sway the mind in turn; the changes, too, are abrupt, ranging from the greatest joy to the deepest woe. Jealousy is made manifest by restless movements, pondering, anxiety, discontent and peevishness; now there is garrulous complaint, or deep muttering; then comes a momentary gleam of hope, followed immediately by heavy gloom, dark suspicion and wild anxiety; the hands are clinched, the teeth set, the eyes lurid with rage; anon he meets the object of his wrath, and love gains the mastery for a time; he believes that she is above suspicion; this again is succeeded by doubts, and his rage is wilder than ever; the voice is harsh, the tones furious; all restraint seems gone, and the unhappy victim is fairly insane with mingled emotions. The strain is terrible, and utterly beyond the powers of most actors. This, in itself, is sufficient reason why no amateur should attempt *Othello*, *Alonzo* or like characters.

Judging is shown by a dignified, grave demeanor; the look is steady and attentive, the bearing stern but impartial; the words are spoken slowly, distinctly, with no attempt at oratorical flourish, and there is a marked absence of gestures.

Love requires the least explanation of all the passions, because it is an emotion with which everybody is familiar. We all love or have loved somebody or something; but stage love, from its usually rapid development, may be given a few words of special notice. If the lover is a successful wooer, like *Claude Melnotte*, he looks happy, smiling and contented; the face lights up, the eyes brighten, the bearing is eager and joyous; the voice is musical and confident, the tones soft and low; if unsuccessful or in doubt, the bearing is eager, restless

and troubled; there is a strained, nervous desire to please, a "sighing like furnace," an aimless movement, mingled with great anxiety and deep melancholy. And so "he plays his part."

Mirth may be noisy, explosive or quiet; it may roar like *Sir Toby Belch*, or chuckle like *Sir Peter Teazle;* and the quiet sort, if well done, is always the most effective; in boisterous mirth the head is thrown back, hands pressed to the sides, the body shakes, and the eyes are often filled with tears; the laughter is loud and explosive; in the quiet sort the body is convulsed with suppressed merriment, the face is red and the only sound is a series of explosive chuckles.

Melancholy is the exact opposite of the foregoing; it is marked by slow, listless movements, absence of mind, downcast eyes, and a pale, gloomy, utterly wretched look; the speech is slow, monotonous and labored; all hope seems lost, and even existence itself seems a burden.

Malice is much like *hate*, though it is a lesser passion and consequently not so powerfully expressed; the jaws are set, the mouth drawn down at the corners, the look furtive and unsteady; the voice is bitter and stinging; the tone slightly elevated.

Madness is so variable in appearance that it may be truly said that no two insane people look or act alike. There is, however, one important symptom observable in all cases of insanity, which is that of inattention; a person thus afflicted is unable, through lack of will-power, to fix the mind upon any current subject. Madness may be general, as in *Ophelia*, or it may be observed in delusions, as when a man imagines himself to be another person, or one possessed of vast wealth or power. Hallucination is not necessarily madness; *Macbeth* is not mad when he imagines that he sees the dagger; he is not mad when he imagines that he sees *Banquo's* ghost,

although the hallucination is much greater then than at first, and the border-land of lunacy is almost reached. Madness, then, as represented on the stage, is rarely true to nature; no audience would be satisfied with a maniac who did not rave; therefore, in playing such characters there must be wild, rolling eyes, distorted features, restless, impatient gestures, and variable tones.

Pleading assumes a gentle, anxious tone; the voice is low, soft and persuasive; brows lifted, hands clasped together or held out, palms upward, toward the person addressed; the body bends forward, and the head is sometimes dropped upon the breast.

Petulance is expressed much the same as *anger*, though with less force; the tone is impatient, the action nervous; the bearing is disdainful, the voice sharp, the speech hasty and broken.

Perplexity, if slight, is marked by numerous pauses; the words are spoken slowly and with evident hesitation; as the degree increases the action is greater; the body is drawn together; the hand shades the eyes or rests upon the chin; the lips are drawn up; in *serious* perplexity the brows are drawn and the eyes cast down, while the speech is slow and grave; in *comic* work the gestures are exaggerated, the hand rubs the back of the head, the features are "puckered," and the voice is now high and now low. This is a feature of most farces, and if well done affords endless amusement.

Pity is a combination of love or respect and sorrow; the hands are extended, the voice is grave and earnest, and often trembles with emotion.

Pride carries the head high, the body erect; the look is cold and disagreeable; the lips are compressed, the words are uttered slowly in a high, unpleasant tone; the bearing is bombastic, the walk slow.

Pardoning or forgiving shows a mild, beaming countenance, a pleasant, hearty, but grave voice, and an erect carriage; the hand is warmly clasped or extended, palm downward, toward the person addressed.

Revenge is hate in action; it is wild and excited, and is represented much the same as *anger*.

Remorse has a downcast, anxious look; the head is bowed, the right hand closed over the breast, the attitude strained and agitated; the voice trembles and hesitates, and there is an evident appearance of mental suffering, doubt and fear.

Reproof assumes a stern look, with lofty bearing and few, if any, gestures; the voice is slow, measured and severe; the tone high with occasional bursts of indignation.

Submission is indicated by a broken, hopeless tone; the head droops, the eyes are downcast and the hands either cover the eyes or hang listlessly at the sides.

Shame causes the figure to shrink and turn away, with downcast looks and faltering speech; the action indicates much humiliation and self-contempt. In comedy shame is coupled with confusion and admits of considerable exaggeration in action, voice and gestures.

Tempting requires an earnest, but soft, eager, and persuasive voice; the tone must be flattering, but at times quite energetic.

Vexation is expressed in much the same manner as *perplexity*, with a tone of complaint or lamentation added thereto, and the action is indicative of a certain degree of *petulance* or *anger*.

Veneration shows great solemnity in voice and bearing; the utterance is slow, the tone deep and impressive; hands and eyes are raised; in some cases the knee is bent and the head bowed.

Wonder opens the eyes in astonishment, often raises them,

and if the astonishment is sudden the hands drop whatever they held; the body bends forward, the open hands are lifted, the mouth opens and the eyes stare; if fright be added to wonder, then the expression includes that of *fear*.

There are many emotions described in this chapter which the amateur actor will seldom if ever be called upon to represent; yet a careful study of all will do no harm, as a thorough knowledge of expression is something which every actor, amateur or professional, should acquire.

Before leaving this subject I must again seek to impress upon the young Thespian the absolute need of becoming absorbed in his part and striving to feel every sentiment that he expresses. Thus, and thus alone, can he become a successful actor.

CHAPTER XII.

BY-PLAY AND BUSINESS.

THERE can be no acting without effective by-play and stage business. To omit these important matters is to reduce the play to mere dialogue—destructive alike to illusion and stage effect.

Therefore the amateur should understand from the outset that the business of the part ranks equally with the text.

This being the case, there should be no shirking of work at rehearsals; for the most trivial scenes require practice, and it is the height of egotism in an actor to say that he can perform the necessary by-play or business without "bothering to rehearse it." I have no patience with such people, for I find that they invariably blunder and frequently ruin a scene through lack of practice,

There are endless little things, "unconsidered trifles" in themselves, which if properly done add greatly to the effect of the play. Rising or sitting; a contemptuous glance; a pleading look; a threatened blow—any of these, done at the proper time and in the proper way, will tell, more than any words can do, what is passing in the mind of the actor.

By-play consists in keeping up consistent action while not actively engaged in the movement of the play. The pantomime quarrels of *Polly* and *Sam* in "Caste" are characteristic. But this by-play must not be overdone, and in no instance should it be made so prominent as to draw attention from others. Actors of comic rôles should be particularly careful in this. If on the stage during an impressive scene,

let the by-play be of the slightest, or the scene will surely be ruined. In the drama of "Border Land" there is a bit of pathos, where *Ralston* describes the death of his brother. I was playing *Ralston* one night, and just as I came to this speech I observed that the audience was mightily pleased at something. I continued the speech and on reaching the climax was greeted not with the usual flow of tears but with a roar of laughter. Glancing around I saw that the charming young woman who did *Polly* was manfully striving to balance a feather duster upon her sweet little nose. I kept my temper; it is the only one I have, and I couldn't do without it; but between the acts I privately informed the young woman that I would give a million dollars—or maybe it was two million—if she were a man of my size for a couple of seconds so that I could knock her little pearly teeth down her little foolish throat.

Business includes all stage work aside from speaking the lines. It is the crucial test of an actor's ability, for, no matter how well the lines are read, if the action be stilted or woodenish the effect is poor.

The first thing an amateur actor should learn is to stand still. I do not mean by this that he should strike an attitude and stand as if carved from marble; but I do mean that he should keep still unless action is necessary. Running about the stage, jumping up or sitting down without rhyme or reason, is very distasteful to the audience, and the amateur should carefully avoid it.

When writing a letter on the stage, take time. Repeat the words as you write them, slowly and distinctly. I have seen actors write letters at rate of speed that would make a stenographer green with envy. Letters may be read with more rapidity, but, as previously mentioned, you should commit all such letters to memory; you will thus be independent of the

prompter, besides avoiding the incongruity of bending over the footlights to read.

It is the habit of most people to count money when received. Bear this in mind, and don't pocket a sum without counting it unless the part is that of a habitually careless man.

Always keep up the character which you represent. If you are doing a "dialect" rôle, recollect that for the time being you are Dutchman, an Irishman, a negro or what not. This is highly important. I have known amateurs who were cast for Irish parts to forget themselves, drop the brogue, and speak for a time in the choicest Lindley Murray English. The effect was astonishing. Peculiarities of gait or action should at all times be faithfully observed.

In kneeling on the stage remember that you should always drop upon the knee farthest from the audience—unless you are facing the audience, as when *Young Marlowe* is surprised when making love to *Kate;* in such a case you bend both knees.

Business varies so much in different plays that it is impossible to make rules applicable to all. It may be put down as a general observation however, that the actor should seize every little point which may strengthen his part. As an illustration: *Clarkson Biles* in "Miriam's Crime" has a scene in the second act where he comes on befuddled with rum and undertakes to make an inventory of the articles in the room. In playing this part I have made a great deal of sport by stumbling over a rocking chair several times and each time adding the chair to the list; then in a bit of by-play with *Scumley* I would show him the list, and cause much amusement by my drunken perplexity over the evident discrepancy in the number of chairs.

If you closely observe any first-class professional company, you will see that the actors are invariably in the right place at the right time. There is no halting, no waiting, no uncertainty. The stage is always dressed, the picture is always

perfect. If an actor is required to speak in a "side" tone to another, he is there, without rushing across the stage for that particular purpose. Now you may possibly imagine that the professional actor does all this as a matter of course; but if you could see the long and weary rehearsals in which this perfect business is worked up you would be undeceived. Therefore, I say again that if you have to pick up a paper, lay down a book or perform any act, however trifling, you should rehearse it carefully until you can do it at the proper time and in the proper way.

A fisticuff or rough-and-tumble fight must receive special attention. In the last act of the "Ticket-of-Leave Man" the long pent-up sufferings of *Brierly* leads him to make a wild, reckless attack upon the powerful *Dalton;* the latter is perfectly cool, and, though staggered by the fierce assault, his coolness and strength easily win. But *Hawkshaw* is as cool as *Dalton;* he makes no mad rush; the two antagonists approach slowly, with wary, cautious glances; each recognizes a worthy opponent in the other, and every trick of the skilled athlete is brought into play; *Hawkshaw's* triumph, then, is a foregone conclusion.

Always turn toward the audience—never away from it, and keep to the front, especially when making exit speeches. Apropos of this, when two people exit together the appearance of conversation should be kept up until they are clear of the stage.

If at any time a break in your lines or a stage wait forces you to extemporize, be sure that the words are in keeping with your assumed character. I remember hearing *Belinda* in "Our Boys" tell about walking down Broadway, in blissful forgetfulness of the fact that New York was three thousand miles away; and worse yet, I heard an amateur *Sallustio* in "Ruy Blas" declare that his defeat was not a Waterloo—

which was doubtless true, since that famous battle was not fought until more than a century afterwards!

To sum up: If you want to act well, to give a neat, finished performance, you must study the business of your part as you study the lines. Omit nothing; shirk nothing; consider the effect of every movement, and strive above all things to make the business and by-play accord in perfect harmony with the character you represent.

CHAPTER XIII.

MAKING-UP.

A GOOD make-up carries the performer a long distance on the road to success. Unless one *looks* a part he cannot expect to *act* it. A juvenile *Lear* or an elderly *Romeo* would be an obvious absurdity. All great actors, at least of the present generation, are masters of the art of making-up ; and the performer who lacks the ability to look his rôle will find the ladder of histrionic fame exceedingly hard to climb. Wallack, at sixty, playing *Evelyn*, and Madame Modjeska acting the youthful *Julia* before her own grandchildren, show the triumph of art.

No book can teach the art of making-up. That can only be acquired by experience, study, and keen observation. You may learn, however, the use of the various articles required, the distinguishing traits of contrasted types and conditions, and, more than all, how to avoid the common errors which the inexperienced are prone to commit. Here, as elsewhere in this work, I eschew all theory and speculation, confining my remarks entirely to facts.

First, then, remember that daubing is not art. Too much color is worse than none ; for, whereas an absence of color leaves the face pale and sickly, too much of it makes a meaningless botch.

Making-up should be done under a strong light on each side of the mirror. On the stage you are under the glare of the foot, fly and border lights, which will quickly expose any careless, patchy work.

The size of the theatre is an important consideration. When the stage is large and the audience is at a considerable distance the lines should be dark and heavy. The same make-up on a small stage would look crude, and in a drawing-room would be positively hideous. The smaller the stage and the nearer the audience the more difficult it is to make-up artistically.

It must be borne in mind that the purpose of making-up is to represent character and condition but not passion. The latter can be shown only by expression. A couple of dark, narrow lines drawn between the eyebrows will give the face a frowning look; but people do not frown throughout a play, and, if a smile should be necessary, those dark lines would give the countenance an astonishing look. Mr. Booth as *Richelieu* looks the part to perfection; the gray hair, the furrows and wrinkles of age, the pallor of broken health, are all there; but the varying emotions of cunning, vanity, humor, courage and other attributes of the great Cardinal are reflected in his mobile face.

Before attempting to make-up for a part you should carefully consider the nature of the character which you intend to represent. Every type has some marked, characteristic feature which you should fix in your mind and strive to portray. An excellent way to do this is to practice before a mirror until you can mould your features into the desired expression. You will thus see where to shade and line your face in order to fix the natural expression of the character. Let us suppose that you are cast for *Legree* in "Uncle Tom's Cabin." This character, as most people know, is devoid of all the gentler qualities;—for *Legree* is a simon pure brute, coarse, ugly, repulsive. Picture in your mind his dark face, heavy brows, square jaw and savage mouth; endeavor to express all this and watch the effect in your mirror. You will soon discover what facial muscles are called into play, and with patient practice you will learn how to set and intensify the character in

your make-up. This suggestion holds good in all cases, for character, and character alone is what you want to portray. In a few deft touches with a lining pencil I can give to the face the merriest sort of a smile; but, *cui bono*—what is the use? It would be neither sense nor art, for no one, excepting possibly a natural idiot, would grin incessantly. Therefore, instead of making the face smiling, I would treat it so that while presenting a full, round, jolly appearance it will be free, if necessary, to indicate any stern passion.

The art of making-up is so great and the field is so broad that no general treatment will do. Each division must be handled separately. To avoid repetition we will first give attention to the various articles used in making-up. All unnecessary articles are excluded from the list, as it would be unwise to describe superfluous goods, the mere mention of which would confuse the novice.

Grease Paints are the handiest, most natural and therefore the best to use for the make-up. Grease paint blends so readily that any degree of shading may be effected; moreover, it is perspiration-proof, and so needs no patching; it is neat, compact, and the shades are so nicely graded that even the novice will find little difficulty in selecting the proper flesh tint. This flesh tint comes in large sticks, and is the body or foundation color which is always first applied. It is the character mask which distinguishes the sunburned sailor from the pale student —the Italian from the Indian—the negro from the white. Lining color is put up in smaller sticks, and is used for tinting the face, shading the features, and drawing the necessary wrinkles. There are nearly fifty varieties of flesh colors manufactured, and perhaps a dozen shades of lining colors. No amateur will need all these. Indeed, for ordinary purposes the following will be ample:

Flesh Colors: Light flesh; dark flesh.

Lining Colors: White, gray, brown, black, juvenile rouge, "old man's" rouge.

In certain character parts, as old men, country boys, sailors, and the various nationalities—Indians, Chinese, Spaniards and the like, you will require a larger assortment. All the articles mentioned in this chapter can be purchased from the publisher of this book, from whom descriptive price lists may be had on application.

Water Cosmétique is used to color the hair, eyebrows or moustache so as to harmonize with the rest of the make-up. It is far better than powder in every particular. It will not brush off; it may be easily washed out with water, and unlike india ink, it is perfectly harmless; it is made in a variety of colors—white, gray, blonde, red, brown, auburn and black; —so that every shade of hair can be matched. It is applied by dipping a small brush—a tooth brush is best—in water and rubbing it over a cake of the cosmétique, thence over the hair until the required tint is produced.

Spirit Gum is a thin, tenacious varnish, and is used to fasten on eyebrows, moustaches and beards. In applying it the skin must be free from paint, or the spirit gum will not adhere.

Rouge adds color to the face, and heightens the effect. The "*juvenile*" and "*old man's*" *rouge* are put up in the form of grease paint. *Dorin's rouge* is a compound powder, and is used chiefly for touching up the face. *Grenadine rouge* is the best, being a pomade the basis of which is carmine.

Nose Putty is useful in comic or grotesque characters where it is necessary to change the shape of the nose.

Email Noir, or black enamel, is used to make the teeth invisible, and is highly effective when playing the character of an old man, old witch, or the like. It is a liquid and is applied directly to the teeth after wiping them perfectly dry; in a few moments the teeth turn black, and of course are invisi-

ble to the audience. It is easily brushed off, and is entirely harmless.

Burnt Cork is necessary only in making up negro characters. The *prepared* burnt cork should always be used. Its cost is trifling, it is far more effective than the home-made article, and, moreover, it is easily removed. Before applying burnt cork the face should be lightly rubbed with vaseline or cocoa-butter, as it spreads the color and besides makes it easier to remove.

Ruddy Rouge is a useful powder for representing sunburnt or weather-beaten faces. For a finished make-up, however, the proper shade of grease paint is best.

Cocoa-butter is an indispensable article to every performer. Before making-up it should be rubbed a few times over the face. This smoothes and softens the skin so that the colors will blend readily—without which blending no really artistic make up can be had. After the performance you may quickly remove every trace of paint by passing a cake of the cocoa butter over the face and wiping it with a dry cloth. Anyone who has nearly vivisected himself in trying to wash off a make-up—particularly of burnt cork—will appreciate this article.

Artists' Stomps are used for lining the face, drawing wrinkles, etc. Lining pencils—and even the small eyebrow pencils—cannot be used for drawing fine lines without constant sharpening, which necessitates loss of time and material. All this is obviated by using the artists' stomps. By rubbing the point of one of these on a lining pencil you will have a neat crayon of the proper color and can draw anything, from a deep wrinkle to a fine "crow's foot."

Powder Puffs are used for the finishing touches of the make-up. You should have a separate puff for each color of powder, or the finish will look patchy. Only a small amount of powder should be applied at one time or the work will appear

rough and uneven. Better go over the face two or three times than to spoil the make-up.

Hare's Feet are used for brushing off any surplus powder from the face or neck.

Face Powder finishes the make-up and consequently is the last article used. The powder, which should always correspond in color to the grease paint used, is applied with a puff, effectually removes the shiny look caused by the grease paint, and gives to the face a natural, healthy glow. Grease paint is not suitable for the hands, arms and neck as it is almost certain to rub off and soil the clothing. Therefore it is best for such purposes to use what is known as "liquid cream." This liquid cream is prepared by simply mixing face powder with water in the proportion of one box of powder to four ounces of water. Shake the bottle until a clear, creamy liquid is produced. Apply with a sponge and rub the liquid in well with the hands so that it may be evenly distributed.

Make-up Boxes can be purchased ready filled, or the contents may be assorted as desired. A good make-up box is a necessity to all who wish to make up properly. For general purposes the box should contain the following articles:

A small mirror.
A pair of scissors.
A cake of cocoa-butter.
Assorted grease paints.
A box of nose putty.
A set of water cosmétiques.
A pot of grenadine rouge.
Prepared burnt cork.
A supply of crêpé hair of various shades.
A box of Dorin's rouge.
A box of ruddy-rouge.
A bottle of spirit gum.
A bottle of email noir.
Several artists' stomps.
Two or more powder puffs.
A hare's foot.
A variety of face powders.

You will also need a brush and comb, towels, and a supply of clean rags.

Having explained, so far as necessary, the purpose of the various articles used in making-up, I will briefly consider how the features should be treated.

Before attempting to make up the entire face we must know

how to mask the various features so that the character may be consistent in every particular. This is a matter of grave importance, since incongruity is fatal to success.

The Eyes require but very little aid from art—which is fortunate, since art can do very little for them. The eye, that "window of the soul," must express all that tongue can utter or action indicate; and if your visual organ lacks this power the finest make-up will avail nothing.

The Eyelids, if properly shaded, will change the features wonderfully. If the upper and lower lids are both shaded heavily, the eyes will look hollow as if through sickness. A fine but distinct black line drawn just underneath the lower eyelashes will add much to the brightness and beauty of the eyes; and if the skin just under the eyebrows be faintly touched with Dorin's rouge, the improvement will be still greater. The shading must correspond to the character and the size of the house. The gray or light brown should be used in the smaller theatres, and youthful characters should have the lids shaded very faintly, unless sickness is to be represented. As age increases, the lower eyelids are shaded more heavily; but use caution at all times lest you give the character a "black eye." By drawing a clear, black or brown line along the rim of the upper and lower lids, the eyelashes will appear much heavier and the eye larger. Care must be taken to make these lines clear and distinct, and to unite them at a point beyond the outer edge of the eye. If these lines are drawn a little farther from the rims, made a trifle heavier, and carried upwards to meet at an acute angle above the outer corner of the eyes, you will have a Chinese cast of countenance. This is delicate work, and artistic effects can be achieved only by patient study and observation.

The Eyebrows require special treatment, for if properly manipulated they will add wonderfully to the make-up. The

color should always be in harmony with the hair and complexion—gray and shaggy for old men, dark for brunettes and fair for blondes. The shape, too, indicates character. It is sometimes necessary to paint out the natural eyebrow which may be done as follows. Moisten a piece of common soap and draw it across the eyebrow which will paste it down. You have then only to paint it over with a suitable color of grease paint to make the eyebrow totally invisible. If necessary the moustache may be treated in a similar manner.

The eyebrows may be colored with water cosmétique, or even the lining pencils. But if a heavy, shaggy eyebrow is wanted, it is best to make it from crêpé hair and fasten it on with spirit gum. Arched eyebrows give the face a kindly, benevolent look; if the brows meet, the face has a sterner appearance combined with low cunning; if the outer half of each eyebrow is painted out it will create a rascally, diabolical expression.

The Nose is indicative of numerous types of character which should always be remembered in making-up. We have the Roman nose, the Grecian, the Jewish, the African—all distinct and different—to say nothing of the pug nose, the flat nose, and noses big and little. To represent all these from a single original is by no means an easy task, yet it may be done.

Unless the nose is a veritable "pug" the *Roman* cast may be easily produced. You have simply to draw a narrow, straight line of white down the middle of the nose, from the bridge to the tip—where it should be slightly widened—to produce the desired result.

The Jewish Nose, which, according to *Puck*, is always "hooked," can be made-up as follows; the nostrils should be enlarged with brown lining paint, and the nose, just above the bridge, darkened in the same way. This color should be carefully worked in with the flesh tints so as to blend readily. The

general make-up should be darker than the nose which thus will be made more prominent.

A Pug Nose may be successfully imitated by drawing a line of dark brown or black across the top, a half inch from the tip; the line must be narrow but distinct across the top and spread out at the sides. Shade the front of the nostrils with the same color, add a streak of rouge, and if the work is carefully done you will have a "pug" which Paddy Miles' boy himself might envy.

It may be necessary at times to alter the shape of the nose by the use of nose putty, which should be applied in the following manner. Moisten a sufficient quantity of the powder until it is like dough; it can then be moulded into any desired shape and fastened on with spirit gum. When in shape it must be carefully covered with the proper shade of grease paint which requires a light touch so that the putty will not be disturbed. The face powder should be put on a little at a time, so as not to blotch the work which would give it a rough, unfinished appearance.

The Mouth. Anything so mobile as the mouth cannot be confined to any set expression. Character and condition may be indicated by the skillful use of paints and powders; we can show the temperament by making the lips thin or thick; we can draw the mouth small or large, beautiful or ugly; we can indicate good nature or bad nature; we can show health or sickness, youth or old age. When we get thus far we must stop, for we have reached the practical limits of art. True, we could paint a smile or a frown; but such work would be idle since it would represent a mere sentiment, brief and flitting, but which, being fixed by "art" must hold the features in an unmeaning smile or frown. From this it may be observed that in treating the mouth and lips there is a limit beyond which art must not pass. Let us consider, then,

exactly what we can do with our pigments and powders, without offending nature.

A Large Mouth. In many low comedy characters—negroes, Germans, country boys, etc.—it is necessary to make the mouth appear larger than it really is. This is done by painting the lips with carmine or grenadine beyond the natural lines, which will make the lips appear larger and thicker, and the mouth in consequence will seem greatly increased in size. Care must be taken, to draw a clear, narrow line of light brown just beyond the lip rouge, which will shade the painted surface, giving it a natural appearance.

A Small Mouth. If it is desirable to decrease the apparent size of the mouth, it may be done in the following manner. Rub an artists' stomp on the lip rouge, and carefully tint the lips, keeping inside of the natural bounds. The portion of the lips not covered by the rouge should be neatly concealed by the proper flesh-tint. An exceedingly narrow but clear line of light brown should be drawn alongside of the rouge.

A Firm Mouth. Thin, compressed lips usually attend much firmness. This peculiar trait of character is shown by painting out with the flesh color as much of the lips as may be necessary, and using the light brown lining pencil to mark the separation of the lips from the outer surface. Firm, dark lines should be drawn from the corners of the mouth downward.

Good Nature may be indicated by painting the lines of the lips upwards at the corners, and by carrying the lines of the mouth upward with brown. These lines should be small, but distinct, remembering at all times to follow the natural lines of the face.

Chronic Ill Nature. A sullen, ugly character may be shown by painting the lips full and carrying the lines downward from the corners. The rest of the face must necessarily

correspond to the mouth to render the make-up harmonious and effective.

Shading, to be effective, must be applied with care or the result will be that the face will have a dirty, unwashed appearance. The color selected for this purpose should be a shade or two darker than that used on the rest of the face; at the same time it should be considerably lighter than the color selected for delineating wrinkles. The eyes, the forehead, the temples, and the space between the eyebrows may be effectively shaded in representing age or infirmity; and at times it will be necessary to shade the corners of the mouth, the chin and the sides of the face. The method of shading depends entirely upon the character represented. In youthful characters it is rarely employed, but as age increases the shading grows heavier. When properly done the effect of shading is natural and lifelike. In describing the method of making-up for character parts I shall treat this subject as fully as possible, but the actor will find that, after all, experience is the best teacher.

Wrinkles. Actors who confine their work to juvenile rôles may skip this if they choose, since they will not be required to harrow their souls in drawing "crow's feet." In painting wrinkles the natural lines of the face must be selected and followed with the utmost nicety; for a badly drawn or misplaced wrinkle will sadly mar an otherwise perfect make-up. In small theatres the gray or light brown lining pencil may be used for the purpose; in large theatres the dark brown, or even the black, may be necessary. In every instance the wrinkle must be dark in the centre and grow fainter at the edges where it gradually merges into the natural flesh color. It will be observed that the principal wrinkles appear across the forehead, between the eyes, at the inner angles of the eyes, about the mouth, the wings of the nose and the crows' feet at the outer corners of the eyes. The last named should be fine,

and not more than three or four should be drawn. To throw up a wrinkle into bold relief I usually draw a white line alongside of it—especially if the character be that of eccentric or low comedy. Wrinkles should be drawn with an artist's stomp, unless india ink is used in which case a fine brush is necessary.

A Thin Face. Characters like *Uriah Heep* in "David Copperfield" or *Mr. Krux* in "School" are supposed to have, like *Cassius*, "a lean and hungry look." The best way to produce this effect is by first covering the face with sallow grease paint, and then touching up the cheek bones, jaw bones and temples with the lightest flesh color; the eyes, cheeks, corners and wings of the nose should then be carefully shaded with the gray or brown lining pencil, which will produce a starved, emaciated appearance.

A Fleshy Face. If the features are naturally thin or sharp and the opposite effect is required, the simplest way is to use only the light flesh colors and apply plenty of rouge. Short side whiskers will add to the effect. Another, but far more difficult way is to pad out the cheeks with jewelers' cotton or nose putty. These methods while highly effective if well done, require so much skill that I cannot recommend them to the amateur.

The Neck should be made to correspond to the face—made light or dark as the character is light or dark, and in elderly characters it should be shaded and lined.

The Hands, too, must correspond to the face; a weather-beaten sailor, for instance, with fair, white hands would be an absurdity. These little points may seem trifling but it is only by this watchful attention to details that good work is possible.

The Teeth. In making up, nothing can be done with the teeth except to stop them out with *Email noir*, as previously described.

What is known as "character" make-up is so broad in its application that only an outline of the subject is possible. The difference in people is so great that no two characters can be found who are exactly alike in all particulars. Old men are not always bald nor gray; villains are not always dark, nor heroes always fair; the drunkard's nose is not always red nor the Irishman's a pug. We must use discretion in these matters, and go to nature for our models.

Youth. The young men of the play, the juveniles, light comedians, lovers, etc., require very little making-up. If grease paints are used, the face, after being cleanly shaven, should be lightly covered with the juvenile flesh tint; this should be rubbed in and evenly distributed over every part of the face, ears and neck. The juvenile rouge should now be applied, laid high on the cheek bones and carefully worked up under the eyes and toward the temples so as to blend neatly with the flesh color. If the eyebrows are naturally dark and heavy nothing need be done with them; otherwise they should be lined as previously described. The lower eyelid should be lined, a faint touch of rouge placed upon the chin, and after the face is carefully powdered the make-up is complete. Too much rouge must not be applied, nor must it be carried too low down on the cheeks or the face will appear aged instead of youthful.

Manhood. As middle age approaches, the face loses the freshness of youth; wrinkles and crow's feet begin to appear, and, naturally, more attention must be paid to the make-up. The age of characters under this heading is supposed to be on the sunny side of forty, therefore the lines should be less strongly marked than in middle or old age. The fresh bloom of youth is gone, so a darker shade of flesh color should be used. The wrinkles should be faintly traced. First, draw two or three lines to indicate crow's feet; these should extend from the outer corners of the eyes, and should vary in direc-

tion according to the character; if jolly good nature is the predominating feature the lines should have a downward turn; in a calm, even nature they are horizontal, and if the character inclines to sternness or viciousness the lines should lead upwards. Faint lines should be drawn from the wings of the nose toward the corners of the mouth, and there should be a touch of gathering wrinkles between the eyes; the forehead as yet is smooth, and there should be no indication of gray in hair or beard.

Middle Age. From forty to sixty is known, somewhat inappropriately, as middle age, and the difficulty of making-up is vastly increased. Indeed, this period, embracing as it does almost an endless round of characters, gives the ambitious artist the greatest opportunities for displaying his talent. At forty the character is fixed; it has lost the buoyant spring of early manhood, and becomes set in looks, habits and customs. It becomes practical, cautious, conservative, and considers the effect of every move. To this class belong the successful banker, lawyer and business-man; the elderly servant, the stage father, the villain, the bummer; nearly all the character and eccentric rôles are of this class, and the medley is so bewildering that it is well-nigh impossible to decide what characters shall be selected for description, or where to begin. It is clearly impossible to give any set rules in the matter—to say that *this* should be the make-up for a lawyer or *that* for a drunkard. *Eccles* in "Caste" and *Coupeau* in "Drink" are types of the hard drinker, yet the make up differs radically in each case. So, too, with the "heavy villain;" *Jacques* in the "Two Orphans" is totally unlike *Skraggs* in "My Partner," and both differ from *Dempsey* in "Border Land." This line of comparison might be continued indefinitely, but the cases cited are enough to show that circumstances must govern and judgment dictate the proper make-up and delineation of character parts. And here let me drop a word of warning:

Beware of too much paint. Make-up is often spoiled by being overdone. It is the judicious, not the abundant, use of color which denotes the true artist. In laying on the foundation color—the flesh tint—it may be either sallow, tanned, or florid; and the shading and lining must be strongly marked. The make-up should follow the ideas of the author, who, in creating the character, usually outlines his appearance, dress, and other peculiarities.

Old Age. The sunset of life shows the face heavily wrinkled, and the color is usually pale or sallow. The lines of the forehead, eyes and mouth are heavy, the lips pale, the eyes heavy. The temples, the corners of the mouth, the flesh about the lips and the eyelids should be shaded with a dark or light color according to the size of the theatre. The wrinkles should be drawn with an artist's stomp, and should be much darker than the shading. A touch of the "old man's" rouge should be placed low down on the cheeks, carefully worked in to blend with the body color. The eyebrows, of crêpé hair, should be full, shaggy and gray. The neck will need lining, the hands also, and a gray wig, either half bald or scant of hair should be worn.

It must not be forgotten that characters frequently vary in make-up during the acts of a play. The change of years, condition or health make these variations necessary to keep up the illusion. In acting the part of *Brierly* I am accustomed to make no less than four complete changes in both make-up and costume. Act first shows the honest Lancashire lad, flushed with drink, unkempt in appearance, and heavy-eyed through lack of sleep. Act second shows him pale with the "prison bleach," while in act third he has regained his natural healthy color. In act fourth he is pale, worn and hopeless. And these changes must be made in the few brief minutes between the acts. Here, then, is another excellent argument against amateurs assuming such rôles; for, taking into consideration

the number of lines, the difficult dialect, the shifting emotions, and the rapid changes in make-up and costume, we can readily see that *Brierly* is a character utterly unfit for amateurs.

National Types. The custom of exaggerating these characters is so universal that it is practically impossible to see a rational Irishman, German or Jew before the footlights. While it is necessary, doubtless, to draw these and similar characters somewhat broadly, yet they should be kept within the limits of nature, and exaggeration should never descend to burlesque. The following descriptions are general, not special, and must be so accepted.

English characters, excepting the lower classes, differ but little from Americans. The "howling swell" is known by his monocle, loud apparel, and affected speech, with which the make-up has nothing to do. Elderly Englishmen are generally made up florid with mutton-chop whiskers, but in all other respects the suggestions previously made will apply to English characters.

French. The orthodox stage Frenchman is a trifle darker than the Englishman, but lighter than the Spaniard. The flesh tint should be medium, the lower eyelids strongly marked, the eyebrows black and heavy. The chin must be lightly touched with blue, the cheeks faintly rouged, and the usual short, curled moustache and imperial worn. Hair and beard should be black.

German. The average stage German is usually a fool, a knave, or a combination of both. Right or wrong, he is almost invariably one of two classes—the blundering, stupid nuisance in cap and jacket, or the long haired, spectacled professor. The German face as a rule is fair, and should be made up light, with a full face and pink cheeks. The mustache should be treated to a coating of joining paste and then heavily powd-

ered with chrome; the eyebrows and beard—if the latter is worn—should be of a similar color.

Spanish. There are two shades of grease paints, known as "light" and "dark" southern, which are used as the body color in making-up Spanish characters. The first is employed in gentlemanly roles like *Ruy Blas* or *Don Felix;* the second in heavy characters such as *Captain Manuel.* Rouge must be used sparingly, employing just enough to throw up the expression, and the eyes are to be lined as described for Frenchmen. Hair and moustache are black, the latter carefully waxed, and either a long goatee or a chin beard may be worn.

Italian. The Italian make-up is practically the same as the Spanish, save that the pointed goatee is not worn, and with this exception, the make-up for one will pass current for both.

Scotch. It must be borne in mind that the people of Scotland are fair, with blue eyes, sandy hair and florid complexions—at least these are national characteristics and should be considered in making-up. A robust juvenile shade of grease paint should be used for the younger characters, gradually changing to darker colors as the years increase. Touch the face up with ruddy rouge, and apply rouge or carmine freely to the cheeks. The hair, beard and eyebrows must be sandy and if naturally dark they must be lightened with chrome or blonde powder.

Irish. I am not aware who is responsible for the ridiculous notion that low comedy Irish parts require red wigs and pug noses; but even this is possibly less absurd than the commonly accepted theory that every Irish tongue is blessed with a brogue. The make-up and speech of an Irish gentleman is almost identical with that of an Englishman or American of like degree; but having accepted *Handy Andy* or *Conn the Shaughraun* as a standard, we must attempt no innovation or the drama is done for. Still, in playing the part of an Irish

gentleman it may be well enough to remember that he *is* a gentleman, in looks, voice and action, and govern yourself accordingly. Characters like *Paddy Miles*, *Handy Andy* and the usual run of farcical Irishmen should be made up with a rather heavy shade of grease paint, and the cheeks should have a liberal application of juvenile rouge. Touch the chin and throat lightly with powdered blue, and line the lower eyelashes; if a wig is worn it should be close-fitting and curly.

Mexican. The "heavy southern" shade of grease paint should be used, and the make-up in general should be the same as for Spaniards.

Indian. Either the regular "Indian" grease paint or a mixture of the dark ruddy rouge and vaseline may be used as a body color, and the cheeks brightened with carmine. Indian women are somewhat lighter, and the liquid cream made from the Indian face powder may be preferred in making-up. The rouge should be applied high and carried straight across the face so as to throw the cheek bones into prominence. The hair and eyebrows are black, and the former should be dressed with a few bright-colored feathers.

Negro. Before laying on the burnt cork the lips and nostrils should be covered with carmine, which lends the illusion of a flat nose and thick lips. The rest of the face should be rubbed with cold cream, vaseline or cocoa-butter which will allow the burnt cork to be readily wiped off after the performance. Elderly negroes, like *Uncle Tom*, or *Pete* in "The Octoroon," should be made-up lighter, as heavy wrinkles must be drawn to indicate age; these wrinkles should be laid on with India ink, before the face is blackened, and the burnt cork must be reduced with whiting to make the proper shade. The color should be laid in heavy about the eyes, but the palms of the hands should be nearly white. Gray eyebrows and a half-bald gray wig complete the make-up.

Chinese. The regular Chinese flesh color is required, and the eyes are made up as previously directed. But little if any rouge should be used, as the Chinese face is generally devoid of color.

Jews. A dark flesh color, light brown shading for the eyes, bushy eyebrows and the previously described orthodox nose complete this character's make-up.

Countrymen, Sailors, Etc. People who pass most of the time in the open air have a healthy, sunburnt look if naturally fair; otherwise the complexion is tanned. This must be observed in making-up; for a sunburnt brunette or a tanned blonde would be a strange anomaly. If fair, the face and neck should be lightly powdered with the bright ruddy rouge—or the juvenile sunburnt flesh color may be used—and the cheeks highly colored with rouge; if naturally dark, the heavy tanned, or heavy brunette character grease paint should be applied and the rouge must be carefully blended with this color.

Wigs. In buying a wig always select a first-class article, because the best wig is a poor imitation of the natural hair. Wigs should be made to order, for a property or stock wig which is supposed to fit everybody never fits anybody; and an ill-fitting wig will ruin any make-up. In eccentric and elderly characters a bald or half-bald wig is often necessary, and one must always be worn in negro or Indian rôles. The color of the hair is an important matter. A fair, blonde, red or white wig makes the wearer look young, while the reverse is the case if a dark wig be selected. It must be remembered, too, that the shape has much to do with the appearance of the face. If the actor is fleshy the wig should be close-cut at the sides, and fit snugly; for a full, thick wig makes a fleshy person look top-heavy. On the contrary, if the actor is thin faced, the wig should be full at the sides. If the hair is worn high, the

height is apparently increased, while an opposite effect is observed when the hair is combed down smooth over the forehead. A villain with a high, philanthropic forehead would be a manifest absurdity, as would a low, beetle-browed humanitarian. A tall, robust man looks well in a heavy, flowing wig, which, on a short, "dumpy" man would appear ridiculous. It will be noticed that the hair of the head is always lightest at the temples and over the centre of the forehead; of beards at the apex of the lower jaw bone and under the corners of the mouth; for here is where the frosty hand of Time leaves its first imprint. No wig will look natural without this shading; and as it is rarely seen even in the highest priced goods I advise that your wigs be made without earlocks; and thus, by using the convenient water cosmétique, you may blend in the natural hair at the temples to any desired shade. The ambitious, painstaking actor will give this subject thoughtful attention, since the choice of a wig is certain to make or mar the illusion. Exact measurements are necessary when ordering wigs, the rules for which can be obtained from any dealer.

Beards. This caption includes not only beards, but whiskers, goatees and moustaches. The simplest—and least natural—form is mounted on wire. This style should only be used in marked characters—like *Dempsey* in "Border Land"—where the disguise is suddenly removed in presence of the audience. A fairly good fit can be made by bending the wires so that they press closely to the face. Another, and far superior style, is the ventilated or gauze-mounted beard, which is fastened to the face with spirit gum. Such goods cost more than the wire atrocities, but are well worth the difference. The last and really the most artistic of all is the beard fashioned from crêpé hair in any desired style and fastened on with spirit gum. This crêpé hair is made in all necessary colors from white to black. It is closely woven or crimped

upon two strings. A suitable quantity is first drawn out, after which it is combed or twisted between the fingers in order to break the wavy lines and thoroughly mix the strands. It is then carefully opened out and attached as follows. If a full beard is wanted the hair is fastened in sections—first to the chin, next around the chin and lower lip, then the side whiskers, and finally the moustache—the latter being in two sections which do not quite meet. The face must be entirely free from grease paint whenever a beard is to be fastened on, for otherwise the spirit gum will not hold. It is often necessary to give the face a rough, unshaven appearance; this may be cleverly done by an application of the blue and gray lining pencils, being careful to blend the colors and not use too much of either.

Before leaving this subject let me warn the reader that his first attempts at making-up will probably result in failure. The art is a difficult one to master and he must expect disappointments. But pluck, energy and observation will accomplish wonders; and the novice may console himself with the reflection that there is no royal road to success, and that he can become an adept only by treading the rough and rugged pathway of experience. Resolve, then, to overcome every obstacle, to acknowledge no defeat, and if you fail in one attempt to try again and again and again until success is achieved and you feel that you are indeed master of the unruly paints and powders.*

* Helmer's Actor's Make-up Book is the most practical and complete manual on this subject, and is indispensable to all who desire the fullest information about theatrical character masks.

CHAPTER XIV.

COSTUMES.

CORRECT and harmonious dressing is a necessary feature in every dramatic entertainment. The figure often requires making-up as much as the face; and as this can be done only by means of appropriate costumes, the necessity for studying the subject is obvious. Style and color are the principal considerations; but the age and condition of the assumed character must not be overlooked.

The style selected must depend entirely upon the date at which the action of the play is supposed to occur. Most printed plays contain fairly accurate descriptions of the costumes; but these descriptions, at best, are only general, and do not apply to individual cases.

It will be observed that the apparent height and build of a character may be wonderfully altered by appropriate costumes. Thus, a snug, close-fitting dress will make a person look slim and tall. A loose sack suit will, on the contrary, make the figure seem short and stout.

The costume should always harmonize with the character. A very young man should not wear a frock coat, and a silk hat should not accompany a sack suit. A soiled or ragged frock coat should always be worn by a "shabby genteel" character, and the hat should be a silk one much the worse for wear. Servants must never outshine their masters in attire. Amateurs are very careless in this, and the effect at times is very inconsistent. Perhaps the worst instance of this that I ever witnessed was in Denison's excellent play of "Louva the

Pauper" in which *Louva* appeared in all the glory of an imported gros-grain silk dress!

Costumes must always harmonize with the surroundings. Tennis blazers, straw hats and muslin gowns are very appropriate for a lawn in mid-summer; but in a drawing-room they would be absurd. A full dress suit at mid-day would be equally ridiculous.

The rules of our best society forbid the wearing of jewels—especially diamonds—with ordinary street or house costumes; and gentlemen, by a tacit understanding, dress very quietly, leaving all loud or eccentric costumes to idiotic "dudes" or vulgar "sports."

Observe particularly before an entrance whether the scene is an interior or exterior, that you may avoid the blunder of traversing the streets without hat, bonnet or wrap—which blunder I have noted even upon the professional stage—and especially that you may not be guilty of such vulgarity as entering a drawing-room without removing the hat. If the scene is an interior and the call is formal the hat is carried in the hand; otherwise it is supposed to be left in the hall. Gloves are worn on the street and with full dress, but rarely at other times.

Eccentric characters and low comedians are allowed a special license regarding costumes, and their choice is usually the result of individual fancy. Some of these peculiarities have become traditional. We should hardly recognize *Melter Moss* or *Marks* without their umbrellas, and a melo-dramatic villain would seem improperly crowned in anything but the regulation black slouch hat.

A gambler or sporting character as a general thing is loudly dressed with a profusion of flaring jewelry. The "horsey" sport affects big checks or wide stripes, gorgeous collars and cuffs, astonishing ties and wonderful—paste—diamonds. The "gentleman" gambler however—like *Leamington* in the

"Woven Web," dresses plainly and in excellent taste, as it is his game to pass for a cultured, refined gentleman.

In dressing the character of a farmer do not make it a burlesque. The American agriculturist is neither a clown nor a dolt. He does not wear his Sunday trousers inside of his boots nor squirt tobacco juice upon the parlor carpet. It is true that his clothing does not fit "like the paper on the wall," that it is not cut in the latest mode, and that, as a rule, he wears a shocking hat. Incongruity and not extravagance is the aim in costuming such a character. The coat should be large and ill-fitting, the trousers too short or turned up at the bottom, the hat rusty, the collar limp and the necktie ungainly. Study this type—and indeed all others—when occasion offers, for you can learn much more by observation than any book can teach.

Give especial attention to the season of the year in which your scenes occur. Don't convulse your audience by wearing a linen duster and straw hat in December nor a sealskin jacket in July. See that your dress corresponds to the season, and that it harmonizes in every detail. Some people are exceedingly thoughtless in this respect. I have seen a *Lady Shendryn* in "Ours" do the third act in the same light slippers that she had worn in the second. The peculiar atrocity of this lies in the fact that the second act is in a London drawing-room, while the third is at the Crimea in mid-winter!

If any considerable time is supposed to elapse between the acts, the costumes with few exceptions, require changing. Character dresses need not vary save in minor details, but the costumes of juveniles, especially ladies, should invariably be changed. The fluctuations of fashions and circumstances make this rule imperative.

Color is an important factor in selecting costumes. It is, perhaps, needless to suggest that a becoming shade be chosen

—one that will blend effectively with the complexion. What are known as complementary colors must be selected or the effect will be incongruous. A blonde style of beauty may wear blue with happy effect, while the same shade would make a brunette face resemble a thunder-cloud. A brunette looks well in red, which no blonde can wear. Black or white agrees with almost every complexion, but yellow is fatal to all except a certain rare, olive tint which few possess. Solid colors, if striking, tend to increase the apparent height. Vertical stripes produce the same result, but horizontal stripes have an opposite effect. The selection of stage costumes should be made under the immediate direction of the stage manager, who must have enough taste to choose colors which will blend properly and thus produce harmonious effects. Colors must always be of equal intensity, or one will deaden the other. Proper contrasts must also be made. Red and green go well together; so do blue and orange, yellow and violet, and combinations like violet-blue and orange-yellow, green-blue and orange-red, and violet-blue with orange-yellow.

By observing these simple rules unpleasant contrasts will be avoided, and the grateful effect of proper light and shade will be presented.

CHAPTER XV.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

IT has been the custom with certain writers on the subject of Amateur Theatricals to discourse with "words of learnéd length and thundering sound" upon the subject of scene painting.

This, I hold, is absolute folly.

If private theatricals are given, a drawing-room must be used and, *ergo*, you have all necessary scenery at hand. For, be it understood, only interior scenes can be used in plays of this sort, because any attempt to represent exteriors in an ordinary drawing-room would merely excite derision. When entertainments are given upon a public stage, the regular scenery will usually suffice for all purposes.

See that the stage is properly set. Don't commit such blunders as having a parlor carpet down in an exterior scene; and if seats are required in a scene of this kind they should always be rustic chairs, or at least camp stools. If the scene on the flat is a landscape, avoid touching it. I saw a weary actor rest himself once by leaning against a painted mountain, which, according to the perspective, was a dozen of miles away!

Be sure that the necessary properties are at hand and ready for use. If a gun or pistol is to be fired, see that it is properly charged—a large percussion cap will be sufficient for the latter—and that the shot is made at the right moment. If letters, money, or any other articles are to be handed to a per-

son on the stage, be certain to have them at hand. Attention to these matters will save many awkward breaks.

Always give the correct cue. *This rule must be obeyed to the letter.* Though you may pad the middle of a speech, or flounder about in the most insane fashion, yet the correct cue must be given or the play will be blocked and the scene, perhaps, hopelessly ruined. At the same time you should be up so thoroughly in the play yourself that you can pick up your own lines even though you fail to catch the exact cue. It would, indeed, be a rare thing to see a play acted as written; words will be substituted, phrases eliminated and sentences changed; but so long as the sense and meaning are retained we must not stickle at trivialities.

Pay attention to your business both on and off the stage. Be ready on the instant for your entrances, and see that every detail of costume or property is attended to so that no stage wait can be charged to you.

Having accepted a part, you are in duty bound to perform it to the best of your ability. If your rôle is an important one, remember that *noblesse oblige* applies to you with especial distinctness; if the rôle be small, then you will have all the more time to study it, to bring out its salient points, to perfect it and to stamp it with originality. The shortest part, so far as it goes, is just as important as the longest, for a servant with ten lines may help to make or sadly mar a scene. When you once engage to act a part, enter into the work with a hearty good will. Be prompt at rehearsals, attend to your business, shirk no work, and follow the instructions of your stage manager.

Keep perfectly quiet when off the stage. Laughing, gossiping or "skylarking" behind the scenes must be strictly prohibited. Such nonsense interferes with the work on the stage and, moreover, causes neglect of entrance cues which may result in spoiling an effective scene.

Never criticise your fellow members in or out of hearing; the first is rude, the second cowardly. Always speak well of the club and of each member's work. Avoid all argument. No club can succeed without harmony; and as argument leads to quarreling and this in turn to chaos, the reason for avoiding it is self-evident.

Indulge in no half-way measures. It may be trite to say that things done by halves are never done right, but it is none the less true. I certainly have no patience with people who act in a listless, perfunctory manner, as though careless alike of praise or censure.

A few more words, and I shall speak my "tag" and ring down the curtain.

Amateur theatrical entertainments will never be successful without coöperation, steady application, and a certain amount of hard work. One must be thoroughly in earnest, thoroughly unselfish, and willing to freely sacrifice personal ambition to the general good.

Paste the following rules in your hat. Their application, though general, will rarely come amiss.

Be letter perfect.

Speak clearly and slowly.

Don't interrupt.

Be appropriately dressed.

Stand still.

Face the audience.

Underact rather than overact.

Choose easy plays, or secure the services of a professional coach.

That is all.

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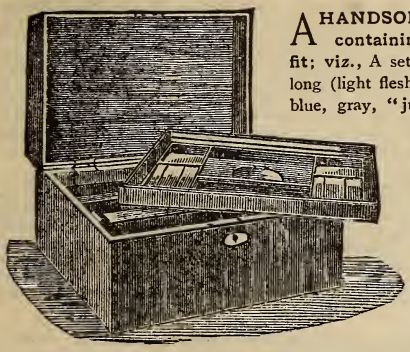
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